AUSTRALIA'S AIR CHIEFS

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AUSTRALIA'S AIR CHIEFS

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Papers have been printed as presented by the authors, with only minor changes to achieve some consistency in layout, spelling and terminology. Air Marshal Newham's paper is based on a transcript of his presentation. The transcripts of the discussions which followed papers have been edited for relevance, brevity and clarity. Copies of the edited transcripts were sent to authors for comment before publication.

My thanks are due to Mr Jeff Isaacs for his superb sketches of each of the Chiefs which were displayed at the conference, and which illustrate this volume; Mrs Maria Sergi for her prompt and professional transcription of the proceedings; Mr David Wilson for his research assistance; and Corporal Brad Ebert and Mrs Sandra Di Guglielmo for their valuable administrative support.

Alan Stephens
Air Power Studies Centre
Canberra
December 1992
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Air Marshal I.B. Gratton, AO, AFC, assumed the Office of Chief of the Air Staff on 2 October 1992. He graduated from the RAAF College as a pilot in 1956 and acquired operational experience in maritime, transport and instructional flying. Staff appointments included Director of Operations in Air Force Office and Director General Joint Operations and Plans in HQADF, while before being appointed CAS he was Air Commander Australia. He is a graduate of the RAAF Staff College, the Joint Services Staff College and the Royal College of Defence Studies.

Air Marshal S.D. Evans, AC, DSO, AFC, was Chief of the Air Staff from 21 April 1982 to 20 May 1985. He joined the RAAF in June 1943 and subsequently flew as a transport captain during the Berlin Airlift. Other flying tours included Commanding Officer of No 2 (Canberra) Squadron in Vietnam, and Officer Commanding RAAF Base Amberley flying the F-111. Staff postings included Director-General of Plans and Policy, Chief of Air Force Operations, and Chief of Joint Operations and Plans. He is a graduate of the RAAF Staff College, the Air Warfare Course and the Royal College of Defence Studies. Air Marshal Evans is the author of A Fatal Rivalry: Australia's Defence at Risk (Allen and Unwin, 1990).

Air Marshal J.W. Newham, AC, served as Chief of the Air Staff from 21 May 1985 to 2 July 1987. After joining the RAAF in 1951, Air Marshal Newham flew fighter aircraft in Korea, Malta and Malaysia. In June 1973 he led the first flight of the RAAF’s F-111s on delivery from the USA to Australia. He was Staff Officer Operations and Senior Air Staff Officer at Operational Command; Director-General Operational Requirements, Chief of Air Force Operations and Plans, and Deputy Chief of the Air Staff at Air Force Office; and Head of the Australian Defence Staff in Washington. He is a graduate of the RAAF Staff College and the Royal College of Defence Studies.

Air Marshal R.G. Funnell, AC, was Chief of the Air Staff from 3 July 1987 to 1 October 1992. A graduate of the RAAF College in 1956, he initially flew fighter aircraft before becoming a flying instructor, and then a squadron commander on the F-111. Air Marshal Funnell’s staff appointments included Chief of Staff at Operational Command, Chief of Air Force Operations and Plans, Assistant Chief of the Defence Force (Policy) and Vice Chief of the Defence Force. He is a graduate of the RAAF Staff College, the Air War College and the Royal College of Defence Studies, and has written and published extensively on military matters.
Dr Chris Coulthard-Clark is the Historical Fellow at the Air Power Studies Centre. One of Australia's best known military historians, he is the author of seven books, the most recent being *The Third Brother: The Royal Australian Air Force 1921-39* (Allen and Unwin, 1991). He is currently writing the official history of the RAAF in Vietnam.

Dr Alan Stephens is the Deputy Director of the Air Power Studies Centre. He is the author or editor of four books and numerous articles on Australian defence and air power, including *Power Plus Attitude: Ideas, Strategy and Doctrine in the Royal Australian Air Force, 1921-1991* (AGPS, 1992). He is a former RAAF pilot.

Mr Jeff Isaacs has worked for the Department of Defence in Canberra for the past eight years, specialising in military art. He has illustrated many books, including Australian Defence Heritage, Canberra Sketchbook, and the Defence Force Journal 50th Anniversary series. His paintings hang in collections in Australia and overseas.
OPENING ADDRESS

Air Marshal I.B. Gration

Chief of the Air Staff

Retired Chiefs of the Air Staff, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Airmen are sometimes accused of being interested only in machines and technology, and of ignoring the more abstract elements of their profession - of being technocrats rather than strategists and planners.

I am very pleased, therefore, that one of my first public tasks as Chief of the Air Staff is to open this inaugural RAAF History Conference.

History is the basic currency of strategic thinking. Let me quote one of the most distinguished writers on air power, Sir John Slessor: 'If there is one attribute more dangerous than to assume that a future war will be just like the last one, it is to imagine that it will be so utterly different that we can afford to ignore all the lessons of the last one'.

That sentiment applies not just to the way in which we conduct wars, but to the full range of activities through which we prepare ourselves.

Before commenting on today's proceedings, I would like to take the opportunity briefly to mention the wide range of historical and strategic studies research currently being undertaken in the RAAF.

In the past few years the RAAF has been associated with the production of fifteen books and numerous papers on air force history and air power. Currently, we have in preparation histories on our involvement in Vietnam, Australia's Air Chiefs, No 1 Squadron, No 2 Squadron, and a history of the RAAF from 1946 to 1971. Further, a revised edition of the Air Power Manual will be published next year.

Given that level of activity and the quality of the work produced to date, I am confident that the RAAF will not miss the opportunity both to record and learn from its past.

Here, I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by my three immediate predecessors as CAS to institutionalise the study of history and doctrine in the RAAF. It is fitting that Air Marshal Evans, Air Marshal Newham and Air Marshal Funnell are not only present today, but also will present papers on key aspects of their tenures as Chief.
Let me return to the topic for this inaugural History Conference.

The authority of the Office of the Chief of the Air Staff defines the command and control of the RAAF, and is central to the way in which the RAAF prepares itself for the defence of Australia. As the professional head of the Air Force, it is the CAS who ultimately is responsible for the organisation's standards.

CAS's powers of command are derived from the Defence Act, the Air Force Act, and Air Force Regulations. Additional directives on how a Chief is to discharge his responsibilities are issued by the Minister for Defence and the Chief of the Defence Force.

Those are the formal mechanisms of command.

It remains a fact of life that in any organisation, there will also be informal mechanisms for exercising authority and doing business. It is perhaps in the context of examining those less structured mechanisms that today's conference will prove most useful. While it will remain essential for historians to make painstaking searches of archival records, there can be no substitute for hearing about events first-hand from those involved. Notwithstanding its acknowledged deficiencies, oral history brings a unique, individual perspective to our examination of the past.

I am confident, therefore, that military historians will be delighted, as I am, that three of our speakers today reached the highest office in the Royal Australian Air Force. Air Marshals Evans, Newham and Funnell will be supported by Dr Alan Stephens and Dr Chris Coulthard-Clark from the Air Power Studies Centre, who will set the scene with their background papers.

The contribution this conference makes to Air Force history should not, of course, be confined to the speakers. Many of you in the audience have been involved in some of the events which will be discussed today. It is our intention to include a transcript of the discussion periods in the published proceedings. I would encourage all of you to take the opportunity to put forward your views. I know that each of the speakers will welcome spirited debate.

It remains only for me again to welcome you to this inaugural RAAF History Conference. I look forward to your contribution to promoting the knowledge and understanding of Australian air power.
THE OFFICE OF CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF

Alan Stephens

The authority of the office of Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) defines the command and control of the Royal Australian Air Force. The current Ministerial Directive from the Minister for Defence to the Chief of the Air Staff informs the CAS that he is the professional head of the RAAF, and is responsible to the Minister for the 'command of the Royal Australian Air Force under the authority of the Chief of the Defence Force and subject to the provisions of relevant Acts and Regulations, and to specific Ministerial directions'.

That Directive was one of a number of consequences of a review of the Defence group of departments conducted by Sir Arthur Tange in 1973. Tange's review was a landmark in the command arrangements for the RAAF (and the other Services), as it unambiguously established the CAS as the commander of his Service. That had not been the case for the first half century of the Air Force's existence. This paper outlines the main legal, administrative and organisational arrangements which have shaped the authority exercised by the CAS.

* * *

World War I provided the impetus for the establishment of separate air forces, with the Royal Air Force (RAF) being the first in 1918 and the RAAF the second in 1921. Initially the RAAF's activities were controlled by an Air Council and an Air Board. The membership of the Air Council consisted of the Minister for Defence, the Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), the Chief of the General Staff (CGS), the Controller of Civil Aviation, and two members of the Air Board, who as wing commanders were relatively junior officers. The Air Board comprised four members, three RAAF and one civilian.

1 Ministerial Directive to the Chief of the Air Staff, 23 October 1976.

2 Sir Arthur Tange, Report on the Reorganisation of the Defence Group of Departments, November 1973 (hereafter the Tange report). Tange was Secretary of the Department of Defence from 2-3-70 to 17-8-79. The report was prepared under his direction by a specially formed group headed by the Secretary of the Department of the Army, Mr Bruce White.

3 Statutory Rules 1920, No 222, Regulations Under the Defence Act 1903-1918 and the Naval Defence Act 1910-1918, Air Council Regulations, 9-11-20; and Statutory
The relationship between the two bodies clearly established the limits of the authority of the head of the new Service. The Air Board's authority was restricted to the 'control and administration of the Air Force'. All matters of RAAF policy were decided by the Air Council, where the opinions of a rear admiral and a major general plainly counted for more than those of two wing commanders.

There were two additional constraints on the head of the Air Force, one of status and the other of organisation. Initially there were objections to the senior member of the new Service having the rather grand sounding title of 'Chief of the Air Staff'. Consequently, for the time being, traditional naval practice was observed, with the senior member of the RAAF being known as the First Air Member.

The second constraint was, in the long term, far more serious. During the debate preceding the establishment of the Air Force, there had been constant manoeuvring between the Army and the Navy to place one of their own men in the top job. Presumably because of that concern, when Wing Commander Richard Williams - who had an Army background - was eventually appointed First Air Member, he was instructed by the Ministers for Defence and the Navy that he and Wing Commander S.J. Goble - who had a Navy background - were to 'alternate' as chairman of the Air Board. As Williams later wrote, if the Ministers had been deliberately trying to create the wrong kind of atmosphere in a new Service, they could scarcely have done better.

During the inter-war years Williams and Goble alternated as head of the Air Force. Each held the post on three separate occasions, Williams for a total of about 14 1/2 years and Goble for about four and a half. It was

Rules 1920, No 223, Regulations Under the Defence Act 1903-1918 and the Naval Defence Act 1910-1918; Air Board Regulations, 9-11-20. The Minister was Senator G.F. Pearce; CNS was Rear Admiral Sir Edmund Grant, RN; CGS was Major-General Sir Brudenell White; and the two members from the Air Board were Lieutenant Colonels R.N. Williams and S.J. Goble.

4 Air Council Regulations and Air Board Regulations, both of 9-11-20.


6 ibid, pp 137-8. The Minister for Defence was Senator G.F. Pearce and the Minister for the Navy Sir Joseph Cook.
an arrangement which almost inevitably fostered an unproductive rivalry.\textsuperscript{7}

The extent to which the CAS was able to command his Service seems to have depended a good deal on personality. Like the other Chiefs of Staff, Williams did not command his Service in the full sense of the word. Under Air Force Regulations, the members of the Air Board were collectively responsible for administering and controlling the RAAF.\textsuperscript{8} The CAS's formal role during Board meetings was as \textit{prime inter pares}, with decisions being taken on a collegiate basis. Any Board member who disagreed with a decision could submit a minority report to the Minister for Defence.\textsuperscript{9}

It would, however, be simplistic to expect that those legal arrangements alone defined the command of the Air Force. The fact was that the Air Board was an organisation in which those qualities which cannot be legislated into the notion of 'command' - personality, leadership, professional knowledge, political deftness, and debating and committee skills - were likely to be just as important as formal authority.

During the inter-war years that was undoubtedly the case, especially after Williams was promoted above Goble. From then on the CAS was the RAAF's senior officer in both position and rank. He was Chairman of the Air Board, convened its meetings, approved agenda items and controlled the recording of minutes.\textsuperscript{10} Those opportunities were more than sufficient for a determined individual like Williams to dominate his Service. Thus, it should be not be surprising that in 1939, Air Commodore Goble, as Air Member for Personnel, wrote to Air Vice-Marshal Williams complaining about the latter's apparently peremptory dealings with the Air Board over at least the past four years.\textsuperscript{11}

\begin{itemize}
\item[8] Air Force Regulations Nos 24-30, as made under the \textit{Air Force Act} 1923. Geoffrey Hartnell has made the point that under the strict letter of the law, the Air Board was entitled to act only as an advisory board to the Minister: see \textit{The Problem of Command in the Australian Defence Force Environment}, SDSC, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, No 27, Canberra, 1983, p 64. In practice, however, the Board clearly was not constrained to that role.
\item[9] Williams, \textit{op. cit.}, p 295.
\item[10] Air Force Regulation No 29.
\end{itemize}
According to Goble, Williams acted as though he were an Air Officer Commanding the RAAF, rather than as the first among equals on the Air Board. Goble also accused the CAS of producing Air Board minutes which were not always an accurate record of collective decisions reached at meetings.

A final comment on the tenure of the first CAS is warranted. Air Vice-Marshal Williams was effectively banished from office in 1939 following an unfavourable review of the RAAF by an Inspector-General of the RAF, Marshal of the RAF Sir Edward Ellington. As Williams later noted, the accuracy of some of Ellington's most damaging criticisms was at the least questionable. Perhaps the real reason behind Williams' removal was that 14 1/2 years was simply too long for anyone to be CAS. Someone with different ideas and fewer enemies was needed.

World War II brought fundamental change to the organisation of the RAAF and, consequently, the office of CAS, as the Air Force increased in size some 50-fold.

Two main initiatives were taken early in the war to facilitate that expansion. First, a Minister for Air with his own department was established. The degree of political participation in the day-to-day running of the Service could therefore be expected to increase markedly.

The second initiative involved the establishment of four geographic area commands, as decentralisation of authority was considered necessary to counter the Japanese threat to Australia. Each of the new areas - Southern, Central, Northern and Western - was headed by an Air Officer Commanding (AOC), who became responsible for 'hands on' operational management. CAS and the Air Board were left to concentrate on major policy.

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13 Douglas Gillison, Royal Australian Air Force 1939-1942, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1962, pp 91-2. Southern Area included all units in Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and southern Riverina; Central Area was New South Wales, except southern Riverina and northern New South Wales; Northern Area was northern New South Wales, Queensland, Northern Territory and Papua; and Western Area was Western Australia. The areas were modified to meet changing circumstances as the war progressed. By the end of the war there were five areas: Southern, Eastern, North-Eastern, North-Western, and Western.
In the event, for the first two years of the war, that major policy was not decided by an Australian. Because of the Menzies Government's dissatisfaction with the eligible RAAF officers, in February 1940 the British officer Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Burnett was appointed CAS. Burnett’s sole interest in the RAAF seems to have been as a source of aircrew for the European theatre, through the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS). He paid little heed to the formalities of the RAAF command arrangements. According to Williams, the CAS rode rough-shod over the Australian Air Board, ignoring the members' collective responsibility and acting 'as though he were a Commander in Chief as he sought to implement the provisions of the EATS as quickly and as broadly as possible. Indeed, in early 1942 Burnett and the senior American airman in the Southwest Pacific Area, Lieutenant General George H. Brett, recommended abolishing the Air Board, a proposal which was rejected by the Government.

It should be noted, of course, that if Goble's comments about Williams' dealings with the Air Board were accurate, Burnett was not the first authoritarian CAS.

The difficulties surrounding the office of the CAS were not resolved when Burnett was replaced by the Australian Air Vice-Marshal George Jones in May 1942. In order to facilitate combined operations with the United States Army Air Force (USAAF), on 28 April 1942 the Australian War Cabinet agreed to assign operational control of all RAAF squadrons and headquarters to the Commander of the Allied Air Forces (AAF), who would be a USAAF officer. Subsequently, the Commander of the AAF, Major General George C. Kenney, placed the RAAF's operational units into a new organisation named RAAF Command, which was a discrete


15 See Coulthard-Clark, The Third Brother, pp 462-8, for the background to Burnett's appointment.

16 McCarthy, op. cit., pp 30-1.

17 Williams, op. cit., p 268.

18 Gillison, op. cit., p 475.

19 Gillison, op. cit., pp 476-7. At the time the senior USAAF officer in the SWPA was Lieutenant General George H. Brett. Brett was subsequently sacked by the theatre's Supreme Commander, General Douglas MacArthur, and replaced in August 1942 by Major General George C. Kenney.
component of the AAF and was under the operational control of Air Vice-Marshall W.D. Bostock.\textsuperscript{20} The CAS, Air Vice-Marshall Jones, retained responsibility for personnel, the provision and maintenance of aircraft, supply and equipment, works, buildings, and training.\textsuperscript{21}

Placing the RAAF's operational squadrons under General Kenney in the AAF was consistent with such air power tenets as unity, concentration and economy of effort. However, the way in which it was done meant that the control of operations and administration in the RAAF had been divided, and that the lines of authority and responsibility were not always clearly established. Bostock and Jones both had legitimate grievances: Bostock that he did not have control over the support services essential to fight the war, and that he was answerable to two masters (Kenney and Jones); and Jones that as CAS he had no voice in the way in which the RAAF was employed operationally.\textsuperscript{22}

That was not an ideal arrangement, but with two men of goodwill it could have worked. Regrettably Bostock and Jones were not of that mind. For the rest of the war the two fought over who commanded and/or controlled what, and whether or not Bostock's first responsibility was to the CAS and the Air Board or to General Kenney as Commander of the AAF. Resolution of the impasse clearly was within the powers of Prime Minister John Curtin and Minister for Air Arthur Drakeford, but neither chose to act.

\* \* \*

Notwithstanding the enormous reductions in the Defence forces after the war, the Government retained separate ministers and departments for each Service, with the Department of Defence continuing as the coordinating authority.

When Air Marshal Jones retired in 1952, he was replaced as CAS by a British officer, Air Marshal Sir Donald Hardman. Hardman's major legacy to the RAAF was the introduction of a functional command system. When Hardman assumed office, the RAAF was still arranged on

\textsuperscript{20} Kenney originally named the new RAAF organisation 'Coastal Defence Command', but that was changed after representations by the Australian Government and the RAAF.


its wartime regional basis. By contrast, the RAF was based on a functional system of groups: for example, Bomber, Fighter and Coastal Commands. The main attraction of the functional organisation was the concentration of force it facilitated.

Hardman reorganised the RAAF into three functional commands under Air Force Headquarters. Home Command was made responsible for the command of all operational units, Training Command for all recruiting and individual training, and Maintenance Command for supply and technical services. Air Force Headquarters was renamed the 'Department of Air' to describe more correctly the scope of authority of the central command.

The creation of the three separate commands concentrated the authority and wherewithal to conduct specific activities to an extent not previously possible in the peace-time Air Force. Precisely how that change affected the ability of the CAS to manage the RAAF seems very much to have been a matter of personality. At least one former Chief perceived a tendency for some AOCs to behave like regional war-lords, who believed that the CAS should look after the bureaucratic business - paperwork, politicians and public servants - and leave the AOCs to get on with the real Air Force work.  

Following a review of the functional command organisation in 1959 by a committee headed by Air Vice-Marshal I.D. McLachlan, the system was rationalised from three commands to two. Home Command was renamed Operational Command, and Training and Maintenance Commands were amalgamated into Support Command.

* * *

During the 1950s concern was periodically expressed regarding the lack of cohesion in the defence organisation. A defence review committee headed by Lieutenant General Sir Leslie Morshead in 1957 recommended that the three single Service departments should be integrated into the Department of Defence. While that recommendation was rejected, Morshead's proposal to establish the position of Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) was accepted. The Chairman of the COSC was not currently one of the Chiefs of Staff but was 'a military man of eminence'. His functions were to convene meetings of the committee and

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23 Air Chief Marshal Sir Neville McNamara, Interview, Canberra, 9-4-92.

arrange its business, tender the collective advice of the committee to the Minister for Defence, coordinate the military activities of the Defence Forces through the individual Chiefs of Staff and act as Australia's principal representative on Anzus and Seato.25

Nevertheless, the independence of the Service Chiefs remained an issue. The Chairman of the COSC may have been the country's senior military officer, but because he did not command the Defence Force his ability to exert a cohesive influence over its activities was limited. The Service Boards were still legally responsible for the control and administration of the Army, Navy and Air Force.26

In late 1972 the newly-elected Whitlam Labor Government announced its intention to reorganise the Defence Group of Departments, and directed the Secretary of the Department of Defence, Sir Arthur Tange, to prepare plans. Without waiting for Tange to report, Defence Minister L.H. Barnard took the first step in December 1972 by placing the five separate departments - Defence, Navy, Army, Air and Supply - directly under his control. The ministerial portfolios of Air, Army and Navy were all abolished.

The Tange report was submitted to Government on 28 November 1973, and its recommendations were substantially implemented. The single Service offices were formally abolished on 30 November 1973 and integrated into the central Department of Defence. Further, in February 1976 the position of Chief of the Defence Force Staff (CDFS) replaced the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Unlike the Chairman of COSC, the CDFS was a statutory officer within the Department of Defence and was directly responsible to the Minister for Defence for the command of the Defence Force, and for joint administration (except for matters falling within command) with the Secretary of the Department of Defence.27

The change in the Defence Force command arrangements represented by the appointment of a CDFS was extended to the single Services. Chiefs of Staff were made responsible to the Minister, through CDFS, for the


26 ibid, p 20.

27 *Defence Act 1903*, Sections 9 and 9A.
operational command and control, fighting efficiency and training of their Services.28

It followed from those changes that the Service Boards had to be abolished. The Air Board met for the last time on 30 January 1976, and a new advisory body, the Chief of the Air Staff Advisory Committee (CASAC), met for the first time on 16 February 1976.

As far as the authority of the office of the CAS was concerned, the Tange reorganisation introduced the most significant changes since the RAAF was established over 50 years ago. On the one hand, for the first time the CAS legally commanded the RAAF. He alone, rather than a Board, was responsible for the effectiveness and welfare of the Air Force. On the other hand, he exercised that command through another, more senior officer, namely, the CDFS.

The influence of the Tange report on the CAS's ability to manage the Air Force did not end there. A major feature of the new organisation was the introduction of a large system of committees which, in the opinion of some CASs, not only suffocated decision making but also undermined a Chief's ability to command his Service. According to Air Marshal Sir Charles Read, the nature of the office of CAS changed for the worse during his last few months in the post.29 The seemingly interminable round of committee meetings which followed the Tange reorganisation made management very difficult, to the extent that Air Marshal Read often felt he was fighting against the system rather than working with it.30 Air Marshal Sir James Rowland believed that the Tange changes diminished the Service Chiefs' authority, with the whole Defence organisation being affected by 'paralysis and arrogation of decision making', and empire building in the Public Service component.31 Like his predecessor, Rowland found that the sheer time involved in attending meetings made it very difficult for him to run the Air Force 'the way [he] wanted to'.32 He also became concerned with the need to protect the RAAF's operational units from the Tange reorganisation's 'stultifying effects'. Air Marshal Sir Neville McNamara found the proliferation of committees 'objectionable', but felt that giving the CAS unquestioned

28 JCFADT, op. cit., p 33.

29 Interview, Sydney, 30-1-92. Air Marshal Read was CAS from 21-3-72 to 20-3-75.

30 loc. cit.

31 Interview, Sydney, 30-1-92. Air Marshal Rowland was CAS from 21-3-75 to 20-3-79.

32 loc. cit.
command of his Service was an important and beneficial change, as was the abolition of the Air Board, which had tended to perpetuate Branch enmities and divisions within the Air Force. By contrast, both Read and Rowland thought the Air Board worked well.)

The centralisation of authority was continued in the mid-1980s when the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) appointed three Joint Force Commanders: Maritime Commander in 1985, and Land Commander and Air Commander in 1986. Each of those commanders was supported by a Joint Headquarters. Under those arrangements the AOC Operational Command was renamed Air Commander Australia and made directly responsible to CDF rather than CAS for conducting joint operations and other specified activities.

The next step in the process came following a review completed in 1987 by Brigadier J.S. Baker, at the direction of the CDF, General P.C. Gratation. As a result of the Baker report, the Service Chiefs were formally removed from the operational chain of command. The Air Commander, rather than CAS, was made responsible for the planning and conduct of air operations. In discharging that responsibility ACAUST answered not to the CAS, but the CDF.

Three concluding observations should be made. First, the present system under which the CAS is basically responsible for recruiting, training, equipping and administering the RAAF, and the Air Commander is responsible for operations, is sometimes compared to the troubled World War II arrangements which facilitated the debilitating rivalry between Air Vice-Marshal Jones and Bostock. The comparison does not

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33 Interview, Canberra, 9-4-92. Air Marshal McNamara was CAS from 21-3-79 to 20-4-82.


35 Similar directives were sent to Army and Navy. See CDF Directives 6/87, 7/87 and 8/87 dated 12 March 1987, to Maritime Commander Australia, Land Commander Australia and Air Commander Australia respectively. At the time the CDF was General P.H. Bennett, while the Joint Force Commanders were Rear Admiral P.R. Sinclair, Major General L.G. O'Donnell and Air Vice-Marshal E.A. Radford.


withstand scrutiny. In World War II the two men held equivalent ranks, the command arrangements were questionable, the theatre's senior air commander was an American (General Kenney), and the political leadership which could have quickly resolved the problem was absent. In 1992, the first three of those factors at least do not apply. CDF commands the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and has the authority to take decisive action should he be dissatisfied with his commanders.

The second observation concerns the American command arrangements used for the first time in a major conflict during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. For some years elements of the US defence establishment had perceived a need to improve the way in which joint military operations were planned and conducted. Consequently, under the 1986 Defence Reorganisation Act (better known as the Goldwater/Nichols Act), the authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Commanders-in-Chief (the US equivalent of the ADF Joint Force Commanders) was significantly strengthened. Both the US Defence Department and a number of defence academics have attributed the success of Desert Storm in part to the joint warfare efficiencies made possible by the Goldwater-Nichols Act. The implications for the future development of the ADF command arrangements seem obvious.

The final observation concerns the relevance of the title 'Chief of the Air Staff'. The question here is, who in 1992 comprises the 'air' staff? Originally the concept of the general staff was applied by the Prussians to a specialist group of officers responsible for the planning of military operations and the direction of tactics and strategy. Yet in 1992, CAS's 'staff' consists of the Executive, Personnel and Materiel Divisions. The 'air' or 'general' staff in the traditional meaning of the term in fact consists of the five Operational Group Commanders and the Chief of Staff of Air Headquarters. Those officers would be located at Air Headquarters during a defence emergency, and would advise the Air Commander, not the CAS.

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39 *ibid.*, p 25.


41 The Operational Group Commanders are from Tactical Fighter Group; Strike/Reconnaissance Group; Airlift Group; Operational Support Group; and Maritime Patrol Group. Because the Commander of the Maritime Patrol Group is also
In 1989 Air Marshal R.G. Funnell suggested that change as a phenomenon had become the norm and was likely to be the *sine qua non* of a successful organisation.\(^\text{42}\) Recent history suggests that his observation has particular relevance to the highest office in the RAAF.

**DISCUSSION**

**Air Commodore R.V. Richardson:** Alan, I wonder if I could ask you to comment a little further on the command of the air force in the 1950s. You mentioned that during the Second World War the whole air force was reorganised largely to provide aircrew and training for the Empire Air Training Scheme. My father was one of many thousands of people who served in the UK and who were just farmed out to RAF squadrons. I have the impression from your writings and from others that as a consequence, there were relatively few opportunities for RAAF officers to gain higher command during the Second World War. To what extent do you think that influenced the shape of the Air Force, especially its command during the 1950s; and what really led us to have another foreign CAS after the war?

**Dr Stephens:** That's an important issue. In the interests of time I didn't refer to the command arrangements for the 27,000 or so Australian aircrew who served in Europe during World War II under the Empire Air Training Scheme. The fact of the matter was that to all intents and purposes those men were taken out of the RAAF's hands. The RAAF experience under the Empire Air Training Scheme compares very unfavourably with the Canadians. The Canadians insisted on having their own group in the UK - a Canadian group, commanded by a Canadian air vice-marshal. The RAAF by contrast had no formal arrangements to keep its units wholly Australian and under Australian command, and in the process to create opportunities for its own senior officers. Those Australians who did gain higher command experience in Europe tended to do so largely on an *ad hoc* basis. There was a number who held what I would describe as relatively minor commands with the RAF. I don't think there is any doubt at all that those arrangements severely deprived senior RAAF officers of an opportunity to develop higher command skills.

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There is no doubt that Prime Minister Menzies and Minister for Air White were dissatisfied with the RAAF's senior officers in 1952 when they were looking for a replacement for Sir George Jones, and so they went to the UK again and ended up with Sir Donald Hardman who, as it happens, was an excellent CAS. But I would agree with your inference that an enormous opportunity for the RAAF to cultivate its own higher commanders had been allowed to slip, and I would extend that to say that it must have influenced the quality of the RAAF's leadership throughout the 1950s.

Air Marshal R.G. Funnell: Al, on that theme, it's interesting that for the appointment of Sir Charles Burnett in 1940 and then Sir Donald Hardman in 1952, Robert Menzies was the Prime Minister on both occasions. I think I am right also to say that in 1940 all three of our Service Chiefs were British officers. I think that showed a predilection on Menzies' part. But after that it was quite shabby the way the Curtin Government hawked the post around the RAF when they were looking for a replacement for Burnett. They approached Peter Drummond, then an air vice-marshal in the RAF who had been born in Western Australian. I think he was a cadet at Point Cook in the late 1920s/early 1930s, and went to the RAF from there. He wasn't interested. Sir Keith Park had been 'parked' elsewhere. The RAF thought that being a New Zealander the Australians would love to have Park, which shows their lack of appreciation of some of the rivalries between the antipodean nations. Eventually the Curtin Government settled on Jones. I think the approach taken to fill the position of CAS in that period was truly shabby.

Dr Stephens: Yes. I would have thought that given the exigencies of wartime there would have been any number of highly capable young RAAF officers who could have been given the opportunity, even if they were relatively junior. I have got no doubts whatsoever that they would have seized that opportunity. Perhaps I could invite Air Commodore Bill Garing to comment. Air Commodore Garing was one of the RAAF's most successful commanders during World War II, commanding No 9 Operational Group during the battles at Milne Bay and the Bismarck Sea.

Air Commodore W.H. Garing: Yes, Alan and very distinguished people. I am probably one of the elder brethren. I have forgotten a lot of the detail that I should remember, but there is no doubt that the Jones/Bostock fight wrecked the RAAF for some years, and was used by the Army and the Navy against the Air Force. It was also a great shame that we did not have a command in Europe. We provided more than 25,000 young men
to fight with the RAF in junior positions and we lost a lot of them. But there were one or two like Don Bennett who served with the RAF and held senior commands. He commanded the 8th Group magnificently. Without Don Bennett Bomber Command would have been ineffective. It was dropping its bombs all over Europe instead of on the target, so his contribution was enormous.

But I don't know what could have been done, we just didn't have the experience. I was left alone in New Guinea with 9 Operational Group, and I was told by Air Vice-Marshal Bostock when I left to go up there to win or not come back. Well, I'm here.

You know, I didn't have any senior RAAF officers come to see me during the Battle of Milne Bay and so on. But I got along extremely well with General Kenney. In fact, it's well known what he said about me and I take it as a great compliment. But it's a compliment owed really to the young men we sent to New Guinea to fight. Number 75 Squadron was written off almost to the last man. If they hadn't done their job against the Japanese, the Army and the civilians in Port Moresby would have been isolated. And so it went on. The Battle of the Bismarck Sea, for example, was as significant as the Midway Battle, on a smaller scale. It was planned by me in the sense that I told the American commanders, including General Kenney, how it should be done, and they did it, and the result was magnificent.

I sum it all up by saying that we had little opportunity to train very capable officers. There were some like Ian McLachlan who were quite capable of working out the air defence of Australia. The RAAF seems now to be in very good hands. I see a big change with the previous CAS and the present one who really know what they are about.

Air Marshal Funnell: Not a lot has been recorded about Bostock's personality and command style. I was never fortunate enough to meet him. I wonder if Bill Garing could share some of his thoughts about Bostock with us.

Air Commodore Garing: Sir, I never worked with him in Brisbane, and I saw him only once in New Guinea. He came up to sack me I think. An operation involving a torpedo bombing attack against Buna had been planned in Melbourne. It just would not have worked in New Guinea where the climate meant your aircraft had 12 per cent less capacity and range. So I cancelled the operation. That really stirred up a hornet's nest. Bostock flew up to Port Moresby and he really got stuck into me. But we were able to show him that he was wrong. So that's a bit of an
insight into Bostock. I gave him fighter escort from Milne Bay to Port Moresby just to rub it in a bit.

When I returned to Australia I became Director of Tactics and Operational Requirements. I used to have to go from Melbourne up to Brisbane to talk to Bostock about the requirements of the operational squadrons, and he'd keep me waiting outside his office for 20 minutes whilst he was obviously doing nothing. He apparently thought he was making some kind of point. Eventually he'd call me in, and for the first few minutes he'd ask about Jones. I was the meat in the sandwich, I couldn't say anything, so I avoided every question. Then he would tell me what he wanted for the squadrons, and it was usually fairly good, like the special bomb sights and so on for the Liberators. Then I would fly back to Melbourne and Jones' staff officer would be waiting on the steps for me. I would be taken in and Jones would ask, 'What did Bostock say?', and so I had to avoid that too. Eventually when we got down to the nitty-gritty I'd tell Jones what Bostock wanted and would add, 'I think it's a damn good idea', and Jones used to say, 'Well go and do it'.

That's the way business was done. Regarding Bostock's administrative ability, I don't think he had much of a go. He was a loner. He worked all right with MacArthur, who thought highly of him, and Kemey got along all right with him. But I think the friction between Jones and Bostock suited both MacArthur and Kenney.

**Dr Stephens:** I would like to return to the point about command opportunities in the RAAF during conflict, which clearly has implications for the development of future Chiefs of the Air Staff. Bearing in mind what has been said about World War II, I think it is also noteworthy that in the official history of the Korean War, Robert O'Neill identified the failure to secure high command appointments as perhaps the major deficiency of the RAAF effort. No one above the rank of wing commander served with the USAF Headquarters even though, in O'Neill's opinion, the size of the RAAF commitment warranted much better treatment than that.

**Air Marshal Funnell:** By contrast, the command of the Commonwealth forces of No 224 Group in Malaya during the 1950s was held by successive RAAF officers, some of whom did go on to become Chief of the Air Staff, and it was a wholly worthwhile command and must have been great experience for them.

**Group Captain J.S. Hamwood:** Alan, could I get you to expand upon your comments on the effect of the Tange review on the Office of the Chief.
Dr Stephens: The three Chiefs of the Air Staff who immediately followed the Tange reorganisation, namely, Air Marshals Read, Rowland and McNamara have each stated that in general the Tange changes had a suffocating effect on the Chief's ability to manage - as opposed to command - the Air Force. By the same token, post-Tange, the CAS for the first time unambiguously commanded the Air Force. As long as he acted within the regulations, he could do what he liked, which wasn't the case before. However, his ability to get the wherewithal to effect his command, to manage the show, took a significant turn for the worse. I understand, though, that the culture in Defence and the committee system have changed substantially for the better in the last 10 years. I will leave it to the retired Chiefs to touch on that if they wish.

Air Marshal Funnell: Concerning the Tange reorganisation, a monograph by David Horner on the command arrangements in Vietnam gave me a much greater insight into the background to Tange's thinking. As David rightly points out, the command arrangements in Vietnam were quite literally scandalous and anything would have been better. I think that had a great deal to do with forming Arthur Tange's thinking about the need for a fundamental change in the higher command staff arrangements of the ADF. Perhaps David could comment.

Dr Stephens: While David's waiting for the microphone, I should mention that Sir Arthur Tange has recently completed a period as a Visiting Fellow at University College at ADFA, and I understand that he will be producing a publication setting out the background and the politics to his reorganisation of the Defence group of departments. Like many others I look forward to its release.

Dr David Horner: The Tange reorganisation took place only a short time after what happened in Vietnam, a period of five or six years later. As far as the respective Service Chiefs were concerned, they were not directly responsible for what was going on in Vietnam, but in practice of course they were. General Sir Thomas Daly, who was the Chief of the General Staff, made it quite clear to me that if something had gone wrong he would have been held responsible, even if he was not legally responsible.

I might just add, since I have been given the opportunity of speaking, that in one of my conversations with General Daly he told me that the Air Force had never been any good until it got a Chief of Staff who had not gone to Duntroon. The reason he gave was that the Chiefs who had gone to Duntroon got their understanding of the Army from that experience, and of course Duntroon - as anybody who's been there knows - is not a good reflection of what the Army is like. In Daly's opinion, those RAAF
Chiefs who had been there thought they knew what the Army was like, and that coloured their thinking about the Army for the rest of their careers.

**Air Marshal S.D. Evans:** Alan, I wonder could you expand a bit on the role of the American Joint Chiefs. You mentioned the Chairman's job and the Unified Commanders, but I wonder could you talk about the Joint Chiefs' role.

**Dr Stephens:** The Unified Commanders are the war-fighting commanders in the US system. They are our equivalent of the joint force/environmental commanders. General Schwarzkopf, for example, was a Unified Commander. The Unified Commanders were perceived as not having sufficient access to Congress for matters of equipment and readiness. Almost inevitably there was a dichotomy between the agenda of the Service Chiefs and the Unified Commanders. On the one hand, the Service Chiefs, who had easier access to Congress and who did most of the work for budgeting and equipment, were concerned with modernisation. That's fair enough, they were looking forward 10 or so years, and they wanted to acquire the best force they could. The Unified Commanders, by contrast, were concerned with readiness; with being ready to fight a war today, and their needs weren't being represented adequately to Congress, so the argument went. That argument also extended to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who didn't have the sole prerogative as military adviser to the Secretary for Defence. In that sense, the essence of the Goldwater/Nichols Act was to give the Unified Commanders formal access to the procurement process, which inevitably came at the expense of the single Service Chiefs; and to strengthen the authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to represent the Combined Services. As I mentioned, while the success of the Gulf War was attributed widely to a large number of technological factors, it's been less widely recognised outside the US Defence establishment that the strengthening of the ability to fight a joint war was critical to the way in which Desert Storm was conducted.

**Dr Graeme Cheeseman:** In recent years the single Service Chiefs have lost their formal place in the operational chain of command. The three environmental commanders are now directly responsible to CDF for the conduct of operations. In light of the comments you've just made about developments in the USA, how do you see the future of the CAS, and perhaps his rank level, his responsibilities and his supporting staff?

**Dr Stephens:** I think that the current arrangements have gone a long way towards resolving the command and control difficulties that the ADF has experienced as, for example, in Vietnam. I think there is a strong
case for always having a Chief of the Air Staff as the professional head of the Service, even if he is not an operational force commander. In other words, the current arrangements are probably a good response to the problem. I would expect, though, that with reductions in force sizes, the transfer of authority from the Services to Headquarters ADF will continue.

**Air Vice-Marshal R.W. Bradford:** If I could just hark back to David Horner's comments on the arrangements in Vietnam, I would agree with him, but I don't think the blame should be put on others for what we suffered up there. To a certain extent I think the Air Force must carry some of the blame for the organisation we had. For instance, in those days, units external to Australia were controlled by the Department of Air. Operational Command only ran matters within Australia, and even though Operational Command provided the elements that went to Vietnam, the Department of Air determined what they did. I speak from having spent 12 months in Saigon with the grandiose title of Air Staff Officer in the Headquarters there. Our point of contact back in Canberra - not at Air Command, or Operational Command as it was then - was the then Director-General of Plans and Policy. He was the man to whom we sent all the messages and he made all the decisions, he was the point of contact, not Operational Command.

I would disagree that the command arrangements have been sorted out, I think there's still a long way to go. I think Air Force in those days still didn't understand or manage itself properly. I agree with what Bill Garing had to say before. There were people who could have done the job but we stuck with the rules as they existed, and unfortunately we have suffered accordingly.

There'll be more questions later I'm sure about the present command system. Personally, I'm concerned about our pedestrian friends, the fellows who march everywhere and can see only as far as the horizon. That isn't very far, and it limits their thinking. They are the ones, I believe, who have had far too much control over what Air Force has been able to do.
AN EXTRAORDINARY GROUP OF PEOPLE: PERSONALITIES FROM THE 1920s TO THE 1970s

C.D. Coulthard-Clark

Continuing the process of scene-setting begun with Alan Stephens' paper on the evolution of the office of CAS, I now want to talk about the people who have held the office. An examination of those who have reached the RAAF's top post potentially can tell us much about that Service. If we accept that it is within the power of any CAS to shape the course of the Air Force - and no doubt we will be hearing much more on that score during the rest of this conference - then the personalities and individual priorities of occupants of the CAS's office reflect directly on the way in which the RAAF has been run. From such a study, too, we might gain insight into the state of health, and status, of the Service, since the how and why of appointing a CAS inevitably derives from events and circumstances of the moment, which equally shape and limit what is open to that CAS to achieve. Finally, the profile of CASs as a group provides a useful and revealing snapshot of the sociological basis of the RAAF's top management - qualified, of course, by the fact that such a small group cannot possibly be fully representative of the whole officer corps, let alone the whole Service.

Given that we only have an hour for this session, I realise that these opening remarks promise more than I can realistically deliver fully. My talk this morning will, therefore, aim to be illustrative rather than comprehensive in its attempt to satisfy your curiosity on the points I have raised. And, of course, respect for the distinguished speakers who are to follow, combined with an historian's sense of prudence, suggests that I should - in the main - confine my observations to the situation which pertained no closer than a decade ago.

To begin with, let me paint a quick group portrait of the men who have controlled the RAAF from its inception as a separate Service in 1921 to the present. Up to and including this month's changeover at the top, there have been 17 CASs. Strictly speaking one of this number, S.J. Goble, was only ever an Acting CAS, but when we consider that his three periods in the post totalled some 4½ years, then clearly he deserves to be included for our purposes. Of our 17, all except two were members of the RAAF itself: the non-Australians were Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Burnett (1940-42) and Air Marshal Sir Donald Hardman (1952-54), both from the Royal Air Force.

All 15 Australian CASs were native-born, and came from every state of the Commonwealth excepting only Tasmania. As we would expect, the bigger states - New South Wales and Victoria - have provided the largest number (five each), to which we can add two each from
Queensland and Western Australia. Air Marshal Sir Richard Williams, popularly considered to be 'The Father of the RAAF' by virtue of a tenue as CAS which lasted from 1922 to 1939, remains the sole representative of South Australia.

To give added point to this observation regarding the Australianness of our air chiefs, let us take a look at the other two Services. Here we find that, historically, the RAAF experience closely matches that of the Army, in that there have been only a smattering of British officers as our local Chief of the General Staff (in fact only three, and two of those were either acting or temporary), but we find at least five occupants of that office since 1909 were born outside Australia. In the Navy's case, however, Chiefs of the Naval Staff from 1911 were almost invariably drawn from the Royal Navy, rather than the RAN, up until 1948. In fact, all except two of 17 CNSs (some acting) in this period were British, and both the RAN officers who held the appointment were former members of the RN who had transferred to the Australian service.

What are some of the other features of our group of CASs? Perhaps we might begin by looking at the paths they followed into the RAAF. Of interest here is the fact that for the first five incumbents, the RAF ones included, the First World War provided their avenue of entry into air force careers. Williams already held a commission in the Commonwealth's permanent military forces when he attended the very first pilot's course held at the Central Flying School at Point Cook in 1914. He subsequently accompanied No 1 Squadron of the Australian Flying Corps to the Middle East in 1916, initially as a flight commander but then, in May 1917, as commanding officer of the unit. In mid-1918 he was promoted honorary lieutenant-colonel and given command of 40th (Army) Wing, one of two wings comprising the RAF's 'Palestine Brigade'; the wing he commanded consisted of his own former unit plus three British squadrons, a formation with a mix of about 80 fighter and bomber aircraft. Williams ended the war wearing the decorations of the DSO and OBE; he had also attained the highest level of command of any AFC officer in World War I.\(^1\)

Goble, who - as Second Air Member and later Air Member for Personnel on the Air Board - regularly alternated with Williams as CAS in the period between the world wars, was working for the Victorian Railways in 1914. After being rejected for enlistment in the Australian Imperial Force on minor medical grounds, he paid his own passage to England in 1915 and obtained entry into the Royal Naval Air Service. He subsequently flew fighters with the RNAS's No 8 Squadron, and bombers in No 5 Squadron, on the Western Front.

\(^1\) *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (hereafter ADB), Vol 12, Melbourne, 1990, pp 502-5.
While Goble did not proceed beyond command of 5 Squadron (later 205 Squadron, RAF), it should be recognised that his record was at least as creditable as Williams. He ended the war as an ace with seven 'victories', holding the honorary rank of wing commander in the RAF, and wore the DSO, OBE, DSc and Croix de Guerre.

The first of Australia's RAF chiefs, Sir Charles Burnett, had served with the British Army during the South African War and later in West Africa, before leaving military service in 1909 to follow civil pursuits in Nigeria. Joining the Royal Flying Corps in 1914, by 1915 he was a flight commander in the Middle East. After commanding a squadron in France during 1916-17, he was promoted lieutenant-colonel to command the 5th (Corps) Wing, RAF, which made him Williams' opposite number in the 'Palestine Brigade'. This was, as Williams could not resist pointing out, a lesser command than his own - it contained three squadrons of army co-operation machines, about 54 planes - though Burnett subsequently succeeded to the command of the whole 'Palestine Brigade', and was appointed DSO and CBE for his wartime service. We will return later to consider further aspects of his career.

Burnett's successor as CAS from 1942 to 1952 was an Australian who departed this life only last August as Air Marshal Sir George Jones. He began his service career (if we disregard compulsory training in the cadets) as an 18-year-old private in the 9th Light Horse in 1915, and served on Gallipoli in that capacity. Initially transferring to the AFC in Egypt in 1916 as an air mechanic, he was accepted for pilot training and in late 1917 joined No 4 Squadron. Between January and October 1918 he notched up seven 'victories' in aerial combat, which earned him the distinction of being an 'ace' and award of the DFC, finishing the war in the rank of captain.

When Jones relinquished the CAS post in 1952, having held it for the major part of the Second World War, he was followed by Sir Donald Hardman, the second officer imported from the RAF. Hardman had joined the British Army in 1916 as a 17-year-old private in the Artists Rifles, a London Regiment. He was commissioned into the Royal

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Flying Corps in mid-1917, but had to wait until he turned 19 in early 1918 before being allowed to fly on operations in France. Joining No 19 Fighter Squadron, RFC, by October that same year he had accounted for at least four enemy planes destroyed in flames and another three forced down out of control; he also ended the First World War as a captain wearing the DFC. As previously indicated, we will return to consider the careers of CASs from the RAF separately.

Following Hardman comes a group of four Australians who have in common the fact that they all received their initial service training at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, post-World War I. The first of these, Sir John McCauley (1919 graduate who came across to the RAAF from the Army under temporary secondment arrangements in 1924, and subsequently elected to stay with the new Service. After him came Sir Frederick Scherger (1924 graduate who succeeded in making the transfer to the RAAF the very next year, and Sir Valston Hancock (1928 graduate who similarly made the switch directly after completing the Duntroon course. Hancock's successor, Sir Alister Murdoch (1965-69), although a cadet at the RMC, could not claim the distinction of being a graduate of that place because he was only mid-way through the four-year course when the Army decided to transfer the College to Sydney at the end of 1930. The Air Board chose to withdraw cadets who were earmarked for the RAAF, so that Murdoch was among those transferred to Point Cook to begin immediately their flying training.

With Murdoch's successor, Sir Colin Hannah (1970-72), we see the beginning of a new influence in the background of the RAAF officer corps. From 1932, passing through the year-long course at the Flying Training School at Point Cook had become the only avenue for aspirants to commissioned rank in the Air Force. With intakes of air cadets every six months, Point Cook tended to take on an aura as the equivalent of the Army and Navy officer-producing institutions, despite the fact that it was not concerned with general education as were Duntroon and Jervis Bay. It was as air cadets at Point Cook that Hannah and his successor, C.F. Read (1972-75), both began their RAAF careers - Hannah in 1935, Read in 1937.

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Following these, we find a group of three CASs - Air Marshals Sir James Rowland (1975-79), Sir Neville McNamara (1979-82) and S.D. Evans (1982-85) who received wartime commissions between 1939 and 1945. Their successor, Air Marshal J.W. Newham (1985-87), also received his commission after completing pilot training through the Flying Training School system at Point Cook in 1951. By then, of course, the RAAF College (later to become the RAAF Academy) was already in existence, having been opened in 1947 to function as the direct counterpart of both Duntroon and Jervis Bay. It was in July 1987, with the accession of Air Marshal R.G. Funnell, that the RAAF first saw a graduate of this institution fill the CAS post - a trend continued with the appointment of the current CAS. Air Marshals Funnell and Gration are both members of No 6 Course which passed out of the College in 1956.11

Another feature in our group profile of CASs concerns educational background. Bearing in mind that the current emphasis on tertiary education as a measure of professional standing is a relatively recent trend in Australia, and overseas, it should cause us no surprise to observe that the majority of CASs received little beyond four or five years of secondary schooling. In some cases, it was plainly less than that. For example, we simply do not know how much schooling AVM Goble received, but since he had joined the Victorian railways at age 16 we can be sure it was not extensive. In the case of AM Jones we know that his family circumstances - stemming from the death of his father in a mining accident when he was just three months old - obliged him to finish schooling when he was aged 14, so again it is clear that in terms of formal education he was not well prepared for the high position which he eventually filled.

Now, as we know, basic education can be built on during a person's working life in many ways, and in the armed forces there are a myriad training courses which officers and other ranks are required to complete during their service. Courses at staff colleges and like institutions also play a part in developing an officer's intellectual capacities. I make this point to purposely qualify the observation that just four of our Australian CASs have held university degrees - that is, about one-quarter. AM McCauley shares with the present CAS the distinction of having a bachelor's degree in commerce; AM Rowland holds a bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering; and AM Funnell is the sole possessor of a higher degree, being a Master of Political Science.

In case this proportion sounds low, the point is worth considering that the Air Force has been no worse off (and in fact better off) than the other Services in this regard. In the Army, for instance, we find the

11 Frost, op. cit., pp 69, 212.
number of CGSs with degrees over 80 years is practically the same, but since the number of occupants of that office is roughly twice the number of CASs the rate actually halves. Compare this with Navy, where I failed to detect any CNS with a degree. If I have overlooked someone in my research I would be glad to be corrected on this score. The real point to be made about the relevance of educational background I will pass over for the time being, with the intention of returning to it later.

Another interesting aspect for reflection concerns the rank level associated with the post of CAS. In recent decades it has been usual for this to be filled by a three-star officer - that is, an air marshal - matching the level of CNS and CGS. In fact, this became the pattern for all three Services from the beginning of the 1950s. Before then, however, the situation was far more fluid. The Navy managed to ensure that, from the outset, the substantive head of their Service was always a two- or three-star officer, and from 1936 to the end of the Second World War (and until 1948) even had four-star admirals in the post. In the Army's case, the rank of the CGS initially ranged from colonel up to major-general, but by the end of the First World War had effectively stabilised at the two-star level. The long tenure of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Chauvel during the 1920s was an individual departure from this pattern, but the previous practice was then resumed until the Second World War, when we find that it was more usual to have a three- or even four-star general in the appointment.

When the CAS post first came into existence in October 1922, just 18 months after the RAAF began a battling existence as the junior Service, it carried the humble rank of wing commander. This was elevated to group captain in 1925, air commodore in 1929 and air vice-marshal in 1935 - in each case being linked to promotions of the officer who substantively held the post throughout the whole of this period: the future Sir Richard Williams. The outcome of this situation was that the CAS was invariably the most junior of the three Service Chiefs, at least up until 1935. As Alan Stephens has already mentioned, the visit of MRAF Sir Edward Ellington in 1938 provided Williams' political enemies with the pretext on which to prise free his vice-like grip on the CAS's chair, and he was sent off to England in 1939 on two year's exchange. Whatever one makes of the circumstances of Williams' departure, I believe it is important to recognise the low standing to which the RAAF's leadership had sunk at this point in the eyes of the Government of the day.

With Williams finally gone, Goble was appointed to act as CAS with the rank of air vice-marshal but lasted in the job barely a year. His departure must surely rank as one of the most amazing occurrences, representing probably the only case of a Chief of any Australian Service actually resigning both his post and his commission in protest - and during wartime at that. The causes for this event are complex, but may be briefly stated as Goble's inability to deal with a disloyal subordinate. The problem was not so simple as it sounds, as the junior concerned was an RAF air commodore filling the post as Second Air Member of the Air Board - effectively Goble's deputy. In those days, of course, Australian ministers thought twice about sacking an Imperial officer, even if they had good cause, but Goble not unnaturally saw the failure of his political masters to support him in the matter as a lack of confidence in himself. In this at least he was completely right, since once his resignation was submitted he learnt that the Government had been negotiating to replace him 'for some time'. When he attempted to withdraw his resignation he was allowed to retain his commission only, and served out the rest of the war as Australia's liaison officer in Canada for the Empire Air Training Scheme.

The sad part about this whole affair is that, judged on his previous record, Goble ought to have been a success as a wartime leader of his Service. But, as Professor John McCarthy has observed, during his occupancy of the CAS post Goble appears to have been almost a spent force. Certainly the promise shown by his operational leadership in World War I went unrealised:

His contribution to the defence debate was marginal. His advice to the Government during his tenure as acting Chief...in 1939 was largely ignored and in this period of stress he clearly lacked the political skill to be an effective head of an armed Service.

That he proved unequal to the demands of the post may have been the product of long years of nugatory existence spent in Williams' shadow, though one may also question whether he ever possessed the political skills needed to function effectively as a CAS.

Whatever else we make of this episode, too, it cannot be doubted that this was another black mark against the RAAF in terms of Government confidence in its leadership. If any proof of this is wanted, we need only consider that when it came to settling on a temporary appointment as CAS until Sir Charles Burnett arrived to

13 Coulthard-Clark, The Third Brother, pp 201-3.

14 ADB, Vol 14, pp 34-5.

take over, the War Cabinet looked not to the RAAF but the RAN. Incredibly, the Government originally proposed to appoint Commodore M.W.S. Boucher, a Royal Navy flier who was Second Naval Member of the Naval Board, but for some unknown reason subsequently changed its mind and decided to appoint the next most senior RAAF officer, Air Commodore W.H. Anderson, for a period of a month.16

At the time of his selection for the post Burnett was actually an air marshal, but on his appointment to the RAAF he received a step up in rank to air chief marshal - presumably in recognition of the important work expected of him in connection with the Empire Air Training Scheme. This meant that, after his arrival from England in February 1940, the CAS was very briefly the most senior of the three Chiefs, until Sir Brudenell White was recalled from retirement in March to become CGS with rank of general and Vice-Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin was promoted admiral in May.

Ironically, when Burnett's tenure ended in May 1942, his RAAF successor - Jones - was given only two-star rank and remained at this level throughout the rest of the war. The rationale for this is curious indeed, since the Service which Jones commanded was far larger than it ever was during Burnett's time; in fact, by August 1944 the RAAF numbered over 180,000 personnel - more than twice the size it was early in 1942.17 Consider, also, the fact that at its peak in June 1945 the RAN only reached a strength of 40,000, yet that Service had a three- or four-star chief almost for the duration of the war. Ironically, of course, Jones eventually was promoted air marshal, but not until 1948 - the year when the number of personnel in the RAAF had fallen to barely 8000.18

Why Jones was not made at least an air marshal on becoming CAS is a mystery, especially since the Government had seen fit to give Williams acting rank at this level on his return to Australia early in 1940. Several reasons might be speculated upon. The first is that, as a temporary group captain and acting air commodore, he had already been promoted three ranks to become air vice-marshall, incidentally passing over eight officers who were senior to him;19 making him an air marshal would have only exacerbated the hurt feelings and general dismay at his entirely unexpected elevation. Secondly, given that In

16 Williams, op. cit., p 256.
1942 the prime necessity was to forge an effective working partnership with American forces then reaching Australia, to help stem the Japanese tide in the Pacific, we can well imagine that there could have been a concern not to create impediments in the allied command structure set up only in April that year. Under these arrangements the Allied Air Commander answering to the Supreme Commander, Southwest Pacific Area (General Douglas MacArthur) was an American lieutenant-general, George Brett. Clearly, an Australian commander holding the same rank as Brett may have been seen as muddying the evolving command chain.

In fact, lines of command did become a serious problem within a few months of Jones' appointment, though more so within the RAAF itself than between Australian and American forces. The bitter wrangling between Jones as CAS and AVM W.D. Bostock, who headed RAAF operational forces assigned to the Allied Air Commander, has become a famous - or, more correctly, notorious - element of RAAF history. One can only wonder whether making Jones an air marshal from the outset would not have helped settle the question which, according to Jones, lay at the heart of his problems with Bostock: namely, who was the senior authority in the Air Force?20

At this juncture I should like to revert to the point raised earlier about standard of education of air chiefs. I do so because it seems to me that anyone wanting to understand fully the situation which arose in the Jones-Bostock feud, often called the RAAF command scandal, needs to take into consideration the very different social backgrounds of the protagonists. It seems to me that Jones' poor intellectual preparation left him at a disadvantage, not least in his own mind, for the high responsibility he was called upon to exercise. Very likely he lacked both the intelligence and vision, the intellectual breadth, to comprehend that the circumstances of the war required a more flexible interpretation of the role of the CAS post, certainly in terms of the way that office had traditionally functioned from Williams' time. Being excessively proud of the notion that he was the bloke-from-the-poor-background-made-good, Jones simply could not summon that bigness and good will within himself to make new arrangements work.

If anyone doubts that Jones viewed himself as a self-made man, I recommend that you read his autobiography - revealingly entitled From Private to Air Marshal. I could quote many sections in support of my thesis, but a few brief extracts might suffice. Regarding the period he spent at the RAF Staff College in 1929, Jones wrote:

The social life was new to me, as was the etiquette then of calling and leaving cards. I learned as fast as I could, but I have

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20 Interview with AM Sir George Jones, 21-1-88.
no doubt that I unwittingly committed many a social blunder...I found the course difficult, mainly because of my lack of training in English expression, so I had to work very hard.21

And in concluding his account of his life, he wrote:

I am proud of the fact that, despite my relatively low standard of education, I was able to compete favourably with people who had college and university educations.22

Despite his rather basic background, it remains to Jones' credit that he continued in the CAS post for fully 10 years, second only in length of tenure to Williams' 14½ years. No CAS since has even approached such a long term, the closest being AM Funnell, who just recently completed five years in the post. Of course, we might ruminate over why Jones was retained for such a lengthy period. The obvious answer is that he did a sterling job, but there are many - then as now - who doubt that to have been the case. Some suggest that he was politically acceptable because he was a pliable instrument who did as he was tasked. Others point to his working-class background as a likely factor in his initial appointment by a Labor Government and a consideration with the successive Labor ministries in office until well after the war, bolstered by the fact that Jones stood (unsuccessfully) for Federal Parliament at the 1960 general elections as Labor Party candidate for the Victorian seat of Henty. Since Bostock had until recently sat on the Liberal backbench, as Member for Indi (Victoria) 1949-58, the thought of these two arch-enemies sorting out their differences on the floor of the House of Representatives does not bear contemplation. Moreover, suggestions of Jones owing his position to the Labor Party fail to take into account that he was retained for a further two years after R.G. Menzies won government in 1949, and the fact that in retirement he had first joined the Liberal Party, before transferring his allegiance to Labor.23

Before leaving the subject of Jones' period as CAS, we might note the odd coincidence which saw both Williams and Jones invested as Knight Commanders in the Order of the British Empire (KBE) during the Queen's visit in March 1954.24 Given Labor antipathy towards honours of this nature, both men had to wait until Menzies' Liberals came to power. As it happened, though, both also had been long gone from the RAAF - in Williams' case more than seven years, and the

21 Jones, op. cit., pp 44-5.
22 ibid, p 155.
23 Jones, Interview.
24 Williams, op. cit., p 368.
award related to his services as Director-General of Civil Aviation rather than his Air Force career. Apart from him, and the equally unusual case of Goble, every CAS who did not already have a knighthood received this recognition as a result of their period in office - that is, until the move away from imperial honours in the early 1980s, from which time they received an equivalent award within the Order of Australia. We might note that Sir Charles Read, CAS during the Labor years 1972-75, almost missed out but was picked up in 1976, with the return to office of the Liberal Party.

Of course, several CASs added considerably to their rank and honours after leaving the office. The RAAF has provided two of the eleven officers who have filled the post of Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee since 1958, which became Chief of the Defence Force Staff in 1975 and Chief of Defence Force in 1984. The first was Sir Frederick Scherger, the Chairman COSC from 1961 to 1966, who became the first RAAF four-star in 1965. The second was ACM Sir Neville McNamara, CDFS from 1982 to 1984.25

Two former CASs have also served as state governors. In January 1972 it was announced that Sir Colin Hannah was to be the next Governor of Queensland. Although he denied that he had either solicited or encouraged it, the appointment caused Sir Colin's premature departure from the RAAF, since he had then completed only two years of a three-year term as CAS. The Federal Government was also taken somewhat by surprise, with the Minister for Air, Senator T. Drake-Brockman, simply stating that he was 'delighted at the news'. Nonetheless, the Commonwealth proved amenable to the change, and he was released early to enable him to be sworn in on 21 March 1972.

Sir Colin Hannah proved a highly controversial figure as governor. The first two or so years went smoothly enough, but in late 1975 he found it impossible to keep his name out of the newspapers. In September he attracted some adverse publicity over his alleged failure to return the hospitality of a publican who 'shouted' drinks to the governor's party during a country visit. Early the following month his dispute with rowdy neighbours at his holiday home on the Gold Coast hit the headlines. These problems were dwarfed on 15 October, however, when - during a Brisbane Chamber of Commerce luncheon - he criticised the 'fumbling ineptitude' of the Whitlam Labor Government, which he blamed for putting Australia 'in its present economic state'. Considering him to lack political impartiality, the federal government moved to revoke the Queensland governor's

25 Coulthard-Clark, Dunrobin, p 281.
dormant commission to serve as Administrator in the event of the death, incapacity, removal or absence of the Governor-General.\textsuperscript{26}

This affair effectively ended Sir Colin’s hopes of a second term as governor. Although the Queensland Government repeatedly recommended an extension, the Queen’s British Labour ministers declined to support it. While Premier J. Bjelke-Petersen was reportedly ready to press the issue to keep him in office, Sir Colin decided not to allow his name to go forward again. On his retirement in March 1977, he was created KCVO, and had already been made KCMG in 1972.

Greatly less controversial was the term of Sir James Rowland as Governor of New South Wales from 1981 to 1989. Overcoming the experience of Sir Colin Hannah’s dormant commission being withdrawn, Sir James was Administrator of the Commonwealth on various occasions during his time in office, sometimes for up to two months.\textsuperscript{27} During such periods he was, of course, acting also in the Governor-General’s capacity as Commander-in-Chief of Australia’s defence forces. At this point we might reflect on the fact that there have been four Australian CGSs over the years who - along with other former generals - became state governors: Lavarack (Qld), Northcott (NSW), Dunstan (SA) and Bennett (TAS). Yet despite a number of naval appointments in recent times, in Victoria and New South Wales in particular, no CNS has yet been so appointed - although Sir John Collins was offered the governor-generalship in 1965 but declined it.\textsuperscript{28}

Having pointed to some highlights in the careers of our group of air chiefs, the observation is deserving of mention that within the separate stories of these individuals we find reflected virtually the complete history of the RAAF itself. Beginning with the alternating terms of Williams and Goble, for example, we see clearly etched the battle-lines of the great rivalry between Army and Navy for control of air power in this country. This was, as I have suggested in \textit{The Third Brother}, one of the dominant themes in the story of the RAAF’s early years, and it directly coloured the personal relations between Williams and Goble. It is, of course, also one of the great tragedies of the Service that there was this sort of dissension within the RAAF’s top levels. The claim was often made - and the record demonstrates the truth of the observation - that animosity between the two men was so

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Australian}, 27-10-75, 14-8-76; Brisbane \textit{Courier Mail}, 18-10-75.


\textsuperscript{28} P. Howson (ed by D. Aitken), \textit{The Howson Diaries: The Life of Politics}, Ringwood, 1984, p 163.
bad that it was usual practice to ensure one or other of them was always out of the country at any given time.29

Certainly their personal dealings with each other were usually acrimonious, or at best poisonous. A good example is the account which survives of a conference in RAAF Headquarters at the time of the 1938 Munich crisis, a juncture when the Air Force faced the serious prospect of a come-as-you-are war. At this meeting Williams outlined the range of activities the RAAF should prepare to undertake, including dispatch of a squadron of Avro Ansons to Darwin to begin anti-submarine patrols, at which point Goble drew attention to the fact that the Service lacked any bombs. When Williams proposed getting the ordnance factories to quickly manufacture some, Goble retorted drily and with scarcely concealed relish at the CAS's discomfort, 'Caught with our pants down, aren't we.'30

Of course, such continual jockeying for advantage often obscured the fact that each man had much to offer the RAAF in its formative years. Both possessed considerable ability, their names being separately associated with epic flights around and beyond Australia during the 1920s, when aviation itself was still in its infancy in this country. But, sadly, as already noted, after 20 years their rivalry had become internecine, and on their coat-tails rode the fortunes of the entire Service, certainly in the inter-war period but equally during the opening phase of the Second World War. And bear in mind that every CAS up to the mid-1980s had service in the war years 1939-45.

I have said quite a lot previously about the careers of the Australian CASs up to and including Jones. Let us now consider the service of those that came afterwards. McCauley, for example, played a leading role with the RAAF forces attempting to resist the Japanese onslaught in Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies during 1941-42. Then after two years as Deputy CAS - a post which, incidentally, has featured in the career paths of no fewer than seven of his 11 successors as CAS - McCauley went to Europe, where he filled senior staff posts with the 2nd Tactical Air Force, and then the 1st TAF, RAF, in France and Germany, during the last year of the war. After this we find him in Japan, as Chief of Staff with the British Commonwealth Occupation Force for the years 1947-49.

McCauley's successor, Scherger, also had a very active war. After finding himself in charge of the air base at Darwin at the time the Japanese chose to devastate that place with air raids, he went on to take command of the RAAF's 1st Tactical Air Force in mid-1945. This

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29 ADB, Vol 9, p 34.

30 Coulthard-Clark, The Third Brother, p 455.
was the largest conglomeration of Australian air units in the South Pacific, totalling some 22,000 personnel, including many members of the United States Army Air Force, so that Scherger was (as his Who's Who entry proudly proclaimed) the 'first RAAF man to lead both Australian & American Air Forces'. In 1953-55 he gained experience of the air operations being conducted against communist terrorists in Malaya, in his capacity as AOC of the RAF's Malaya Command.

With experience of command of a Beaufort bomber wing in New Guinea in 1945, Hancock went on to become the founding commandant of the RAAF College 1947-49, and followed in Scherger's footsteps as AOC RAF Malaya in 1957-59. It fell to him to preside over the early stages of the RAAF's slide into the Vietnam War. His successor, Murdoch, had won his spurs during a notable expedition to Antarctica in 1935-36, involving a search for the lost American polar aviator Lincoln Ellsworth. He was attached to RAF Coastal Command in 1941 and subsequently commanded a squadron based in Iceland, then served as a staff officer in the Middle East before becoming involved in planning for the famous Dieppe raid. From 1944 he was back in Australia, involved in planning the air strikes launched against Java and further afield from Northwest Area, and later he was with 1st TAF during the final big operations of the war in Borneo.

Hannah also had experience in the Pacific theatre, commanding a Beaufort squadron and then a wing in New Guinea in 1943-44. AM Rowland served as a Pathfinder with RAF Bomber Command, was shot down over Europe and spent five months as a prisoner-of-war in Germany. ACM McNamara served as a fighter pilot with 75 Squadron during World War II, and flew again in this capacity with 77 Squadron in 1953, during the Korean War. He also commanded the RAAF contingent in Thailand in 1966-67, and later commanded RAAF forces deployed to Vietnam in 1971-72. Vietnam also features in the experience of AM Evans, who was CO of No 2 Squadron at Phan Rang in 1967-68; before this he had also served during the Berlin Airlift in 1948. Like Sir Neville McNamara, AM Newham served with 77 Squadron in Korea, then went to Malta during the period that 78 Wing was deployed there in 1953-55, and then also served with No 3 Squadron in Malaya in 1958-60. Australia's little-known involvement in Thailand - a sideshow to our larger participation in Vietnam - also features in the career of AM Funnell, who was CO of No 79 Squadron at Ubon in 1966.

And what of our two air chiefs from the RAF, where do they fit into the picture? After the First World War Burnett had filled a number of senior command and staff postings in Iraq and the Air Ministry, but he is usually remembered as being a CAS who saw his main function as being to ensure that Australian resources were available to bolster the British war effort to the fullest extent possible. One historian has even characterised him as the 'first "recruit" into the Australian
section of the Empire Air Training Scheme. Only recently has anyone begun to question whether that view is entirely fair or correct, and one suspects that this process of revision still has some way to go. One area in which he was not nearly so reactionary as his Australian confrères was in the matter of establishing a women’s service within the RAAF, although we cannot discount the influence of his daughter’s active involvement in that organisation. What seems unarguable is that Burnett was never such a heavyweight in his own Service as to become a shining ornament to the RAAF. At the time he was appointed to come to Australia, he was aged 58 and on the verge of retirement, filling the mainly titular appointment as one the RAF’s two inspector-generals, and was ill to boot (suffering from a stomach ulcer).

By comparison, Sir Donald Hardman was far from the end of his career when he came to Australia to succeed Jones. In fact, he had risen from wing commander to acting rank as an air vice-marshal in the course of the Second World War, and had only been confirmed in this rank in July 1948. He was granted acting air marshal’s rank on taking up the RAAF post in January 1952, and was not substantively promoted until the following July - at the same time as he was made KCB. When he returned to England he was appointed Air Member for Supply and Organisation on the Air Council, promoted ACM in 1955, and when he retired in 1958 was created GBE in recognition of his services. It cannot be fairly said that Hardman was a 'cast-off', a 'dud', or any of the other epithets often applied by detractors of such appointments.

Of interest when talking about RAF appointments to the Australian Service, is that fact that we came very close to having another distinguished British officer to head the RAAF. This was Air Vice-Marshal R.M. Drummond (later Air Marshal Sir Peter Drummond), who was actually an Australian by birth. In 1942-43 discussions went on for some time about abolishing the Air Board and appointing Drummond as AOC RAAF, as a means of putting an end to the Jones-Bostock feud. Unfortunately, the Air Ministry in London was loathe to part with the services of an officer with such 'exceptional operational

31 John McCarthy, A Last Call of Empire: Australian Aircrew, Britain and the Empire Air Training Scheme, Canberra, 1988, p 30.


34 Coulthard-Clark, The Third Brother, p 463.
experience' and strongly opposed his appointment.\textsuperscript{35} One wonders whether the wartime history of the RAAF would have been substantially different had Drummond been allowed to accept.

Unfortunately, despite the wealth of first-hand experience of so much of the RAAF's story which is encapsulated in a handful of individuals, only a few of them have left a permanent record for future generations. To date, we only have autobiographies by Williams, Jones and Hancock,\textsuperscript{36} a biography of Scherger,\textsuperscript{37} and AM Evans' discussion of contemporary defence issues\textsuperscript{38} to whet our appetite. This is all the more regrettable, given the fact that the RAAF was very fortunate to have virtually all its CASs still living until barely 15 years ago. Up until the death of Sir Colin Hannah in 1978, only AVM Goble and ACM Burnett had previously passed on - Burnett in 1945, Goble in 1948. Since then we have lost Williams (1980), Hardman (1982), Scherger and Murdoch (1984), McCauley (1989), and now Jones this year. Clearly, the opportunity should not be lost to complete as much of the record as we can before the ranks are further diminished.

To wrap up discussion of the subject of this paper, let me conclude with the observation that any person who succeeds in reaching the top of one of the armed Services in this country can be fairly deemed remarkable. In this regard those who have headed the RAAF are probably no more special, in reality, than those who have made it to CGS or CNS. But I hope that what I have said this morning gives some meaning to the description used in my title, and that we can all agree that Australia's air chiefs are, collectively, a group of people well above the ordinary.

\section*{DISCUSSION}

\textbf{Air Marshal J.W. Newham:} You mentioned that only a few of the RAAF's Chiefs have published autobiographies or written on defence. It would be interesting to hear by comparison whether the Chiefs from the other Services have published.

\textbf{Dr Coulthard-Clark:} For the Army, there is Rowell's autobiography. The careers of some other CGSs - Legge and Bridges, for example -


\textsuperscript{36} Sir Valston Hancock, \textit{Challenge}, Northbridge, 1990.

\textsuperscript{37} Harry Rayner, \textit{Scherger}, Canberra, 1984.

\textsuperscript{38} Air Marshal S.D. Evans, \textit{A Fatal Rivalry}, South Melbourne, 1990.
who haven't written anything themselves have been covered by other authors. The Navy is much worse off than we are, but that's a reflection on the state of naval history in this country as a whole. I know the RAN is attempting to do something about that.

**Wing Commander Mark Lax:** This is more of an observation than a question. One thing that the audience here might not be aware of is that Peter Maxwell Drummond actually served under Dickie Williams in Number 1 Squadron AFC. He was an Australian who transferred from the RFC to fight for the Australians at Palestine, so there's a connection there with Drummond, Hardman and Williams.

**Dr Coulthard-Clark:** Also, of course, Drummond was out here in Australia on exchange for some five or six years in the 1920s, filling senior appointments at RAAF Headquarters. Drummond was Australian by birth and he never really severed that connection. In fact I found that correspondence between Williams and Drummond continued through the 1920s and 1930s, so they maintained that connection. Thank you for your observation.

**Dr Alan Stephens:** Chris, you mentioned that Williams was effectively banished in 1938. Goble was more or less sacked in 1939, and following the Second World War every AFC member with the exception of Jones had his service terminated, even though a number of them had six or seven years to run. Could you throw more light on just what was going on at the higher command levels before the war. Were the political difficulties these senior RAAF officers clearly experienced related to them as individuals, to the RAAF as a new Service, or to Army and Navy attempts to gain control of air power?

**Dr Coulthard-Clark:** At the highest level, given the political environment in which Williams had to operate, it was virtually impossible not to make enemies among both the other Services and also the politicians and public servants. So that aspect applied at that level. I think one should be fair; whatever his deficiencies, Williams played that game extremely well. He was a shrewd operator and defended the RAAF's interests. Further down though, I think we see a real problem which arose from the way in which the RAAF was initially set up, in that the personnel who were selected were those who had served with the AFC, the Royal Naval Air Service and subsequently the RAF. They formed the core of the flying element of the RAAF and progressively rose through the ranks during the 1920s and 1930s. But the problem was that these people were wartime fliers. Apart from Williams, none of them really had any experience in the Services before. They weren't trained administrators, and I think there was a lack of confidence right from the start about their administrative capabilities. You alluded to this in your paper, and it was really the reason why the Air Council was set up.
The Chief of the General Staff made the point quite directly to the Government that young fliers could not be expected to have experience of what it was like to work under a responsible Government and that it would take time for them to learn financial management. So that was the rationale for placing the Air Council above the Air Board. And I think when you look at the performance of some of these people, that lack of faith was to a large extent justified. To put it bluntly, we had a lot of donkeys in our middle ranks. To be fair, that doesn't apply to everyone, but I think there were some appalling standards observed in the pre-war RAAF, and that progressively undermined the Government's confidence in what the RAAF could produce when it came to a shooting war. For example, the Ellington investigation of the RAAF in 1938 was triggered by a series of quite bizarre aircraft accidents, and Ellington's adverse findings really only confirmed the Government's suspicion that all was not well in the RAAF's administration.

Mr T. Lawrence: To what extent did the growth of civil aviation affect the RAAF? Can you also comment on the high accident rates in civil aviation and the RAAF in the 1930s, and the establishment of an independent department of civil aviation.

Dr Coulthard-Clark: Civil Aviation had originally started off very much under the umbrella of the RAAF, but by the mid to late 1930s it had well and truly moved past needing that sort of shelter. In fact, you find that Civil Aviation was operating aircraft which were far superior to the level of technology available to the Air Force. Our Air Force was obsolescent. Even when we got relatively new types from Britain, they were outdated virtually before they had been brought into service. I think the CAS had a hard time dealing with that. Williams was also largely occupied with the politics of keeping the RAAF going. The priority given to those different demands is alluded to in the letters which were exchanged between Gohle and Williams. In Gable's opinion, the RAAF was spending far too much time on public relations activities and not enough on providing young airmen with proper operational training. I think it's there that you find the explanation for the high number of RAAF aircraft accidents.

You are quite right in referring to the accident rate within civil aviation and, of course, there was the Kyeema affair which effectively triggered the separation of civil aviation into an independent department. I think it was largely coincidental that those two things happened together, although it is interesting that they occurred more or less in parallel. A succession of air accidents in the civil field saw the departure of the Controller of Civil Aviation, Edgar Johnston, who was pushed aside in much the same way as Williams. But I don't think the problems were the same. In 1938 the RAAF was still a fairly small Service, whereas the aviation industry was a much larger concern.
Air Vice-Marshal R.W. Bradford: Chris, more a comment than anything else. I was unaware of the complexity of the background to the appointment of the various Chiefs of Staff, not only within Air Force, but also Army and Navy, at the differing rank levels. It seems to me that this was probably a political decision. Maybe that’s something you or David [Horner] could well look into because it would make for interesting reading. Why was the Chief of the Army a certain rank, why was the Chief of the Air Force a certain rank at a particular time?

Dr Coulthard-Clark: There is an explanation for that in exactly the terms you’ve suggested. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Government’s priority was on the Navy. The Singapore strategy was the key element in our Defence policy, and accordingly as much as 50 to 60 per cent of the Defence budget was spent annually on the Navy. That explains why the Navy got priority, and why its Chief held the rank level he did. Navy also had the largest number of permanent personnel during the 1930s. While the Army had a much smaller permanent cadre, it had a much larger organisation to administer. I suppose that provides justification for the rank level held there. In the Air Force’s case, the RAAF generally was well under 1000 personnel up until the early 1930s. In fact, we went to war in 1939 with about 3500 personnel, so in the pre-war years it was probably hard to justify having a rank higher than air vice-marshal.

Air Commodore W.H. Garing: Dr Coulthard-Clark touched on the point that Air Marshal Williams had a bunch of donkeys working for him. Williams started the Air Force in 1921 with officers who had been flying in Mesopotamia, and they were a bunch of larrikins. That’s why Air Marshal Williams never called an officer, no matter what rank, by his christian name. He told that to me personally because I got along very well with him. Secondly, you must remember that he built the administration of the Air Force to the point where it expanded with enormous speed when war broke out. He was a man of very great depth of knowledge. He knew the political situation and he had the most dreadful task of preventing the Air Force from being split down the middle, half Navy, half Army.

Dr Coulthard-Clark: Thank you very much Air Commodore Garing. One could mention that Williams was well aware of the deficiencies of his Service, and in fact you see him taking positive measures in the 1920s to bolster the standard of those people coming into the officer ranks. Given the unlikelihood of the RAAF ever getting a cadet college up and running during the 1920s and 1930s, his solution was to take graduates from Duntroon. In the circumstances, it was a sensible decision.

Air Commodore John MacNaughtan: Chris, you were fairly critical of Sir George Jones’ education qualifications and social attributes and
you inferred that Bostock would have been better because of his presumed education and social attributes. Is that a fair conclusion? Would you speculate on whether those attributes are important to the office of CAS and whether Bostock would have made a better CAS?

Dr Coulthard-Clark: I suspect Bostock would have made a better CAS but not for the reasons you’ve mentioned. I’m not necessarily saying that education was the difference between those two; I think intellectual ability was. My criticism of Jones is really that he was too proud of being the self-made man. One can’t deny him credit for that, but the problem was, he stuck the bits together a little too roughly and the seams showed.

Bostock actually expected to be CAS. Burnett was keen to see him take the job, and it was really only the circumstances which eventuated early in 1942 that prevented it. In fact, there is reason to believe that Bostock was quite happy with the way things worked out. He was happy to be going to MacArthur’s Headquarters, to the operational command, because he expected that would become the most important job in the RAAF. The job of CAS would then go to a less important officer, as Jones undoubtedly was at that point, a more junior officer, who would merely command the RAAF’s administrative tail. Jones told me when I interviewed him a couple of years ago that when he was called into Burnett’s office to be informed he had been appointed CAS, Burnett was sitting behind the desk with Jones’ personal file on the table and simply said ‘I’ve been told to hand over to you’. Standing at Burnett’s elbow was Bostock, who was beaming, because he had been told he was going north to the operational command.

Now, I think what we see here is the way this command arrangement was meant to work. But Jones, imbued with the way the office of CAS had operated during Williams’ time, was determined to retain that authority. And I think that is where we start seeing the basis of the fallout between Jones and Bostock. So I don’t think it’s an educational thing.

I do think it has become more important these days, in terms of the RAAF’s standing, to have Chiefs who have recognised educational qualifications. We may not feel that way as individuals, but it is the way other people outside the Service with whom we have to deal, in particular the Public Service, tend to make a judgment on the intellectual capacity of the person they are dealing with. We may not like it but I think that is increasingly the way of the world. You see it in the American Services, where officers are expected not only to have first degrees, but in many cases higher degrees.

Air Vice-Marshal W.M. Collins: My question follows on from the point you were developing there. Leaving aside the difficulties with the first
couple of Chiefs and Sir George Jones, does your research indicate that the Service identifies potential CASs at an appropriately early time and then develops them through career postings, education and the like, so that they can do the job when they get there?

**Dr Coulthard-Clark:** My research doesn't show that it has happened very much to date. I'm sure there are individuals who are identified quite often at around the wing commander level as having the potential to go on further, and who are encouraged and given the sorts of appointment they would need. I suggest you have a look at Air Vice-Marshall Hewitt's autobiography, *Adversity in Success*. He talks in the concluding sections about the process of demobilisation when he was air member for personnel, and mentions a number of individuals who were identified as clearly having the potential to reach the highest ranks. They were groomed accordingly, and all of them achieved a high rank. I think that is probably a fairly natural process which you can see in all the Services. I certainly haven't seen any records that indicate directly that an individual was thought to be CAS material and was pushed through. But I have heard suggestions that there is a policy, either announced or implicit, that at some stage we will expect all our senior officers to have a university education before they will be promoted. I think that is a logical development.

**Dr David Homer:** Chris, the question was asked several minutes ago about biographies and autobiographies on the other Services' Chiefs. I think the Air Force has done quite well in comparison with the Army as far as autobiographies are concerned. The Air Force has several and the Army only one, Rowell. On the other hand, there have been biographies of seven Army Chiefs of Staff if we include Blamey. As well, there are other senior Army officers who were not CGS but who have written autobiographies, such as Norris, Bennett and Stretton.

**Dr Coulthard-Clark:** Thank you very much David. The point I was actually making about the value of those sorts of publications can be seen most clearly in Williams' autobiography, *These Are Facts* - notwithstanding that the facts he claims to have got right are in some respects wrong. That is the best book I think we could find for providing an insight into what was actually happening in the RAAF during the period Williams served. I think it demonstrates the value to historians of having that sort of record set down by the person involved. Whether it's right or whether it's wrong, at least we have an insight into what they made of things, what they thought they were doing and what they were attempting to do. Historians then have some prospect of making a judgment on whether they got it right or whether they succeeded in what they were trying to do.

**Air Commodore R.V. Richardson:** Can you comment on the influence civilians had on the selection of CASs during the war years.
Dr Coulthard-Clark: Well, we are really talking here of only one or two individuals. I'm not sure what Shedden's influence would have been in Goble's selection. I suspect it would have been fairly strong, simply because Shedden was no great admirer of Williams. Williams certainly suspected that Shedden had played a significant role in undermining him during the Ellington business. I think Shedden's main concern would have been simply to see Williams on his way, so he wasn't particularly bothered about who succeeded him. Shedden definitely had a hand in Burnett's appointment. In fact, part of Goble's complaint was that his deputy was undermining him by communicating directly with the Air Ministry in London through Shedden's office. Shedden allowed himself to be used in that sort of way.

In terms of Jones' appointment, frankly, Jones got it by mistake. What happened was the matter went to Cabinet and the Prime Minister was flatly opposed to having Williams resume in the job. The Minister for Air flatly refused to have Bostock in the job, so they looked around for a compromise. Prime Minister Curtin reportedly asked Minister for Air Drakeford, 'Well, who's next on your list?'. The list Drakeford had at his elbow was not the Air Force List, it was a list of proposed appointments to the Allied Air Force Headquarters. That list had Williams and Bostock at the top. Third on that, and intended to be Chief of Staff at the AAF, was Jones. The Minister simply blurted out, 'Jones is the next on the list', at which point the Prime Minister cast around the Cabinet room, 'Does anybody know anything against Jones?'. There was silence; so Jones it was. So Shedden can't claim credit for that.
Air Vice Marshal R. Williams
31 Mar. 1921 - 12 Aug. 1921
10 Feb. 1925 - 6 Dec. 1932
13 June 1934 - 27 Feb. 1939
Air Vice Marshal S. J. Goble (acting)
15 Dec. 1922 – 9 Feb. 1925
7 Dec. 1932 – 12 June 1934
28 Feb. 1939 – 8 Jan. 1940
Air Marshal G. Jones
5 May 1942 - 13 Jan 1952
Air Marshal Sir Donald Hardman, RAF
14 Jan 1952 - 17 Jan 1954
Air Marshal Sir Valeson Hancock
29 May 1940 - 31 May 1943
Air Marshal Sir Alistair Murdoch
1 June 1965 - 31 Dec 1969
Air Marshal C.F. Read
Air Marshal Sir James Rowland
21 Mar 1975 - 20 Mar 1979
Air Marshal Sir Neville Mc Namara
21 Mar 1979 - 20 Apr 1982
Air Marshal S.D. Evans
21 Apr 1982 – 20 May 1985
Air Marshal J.W. Newham
21 May 1985 - 2 July 1987
Many of you will be aware that I have rarely exhibited a reluctance to speak on defence or strategic issues - or indeed on many other subjects with a defence flavour. However, I must confess that I find talking at a history conference a rather daunting prospect.

Why is this so? I believe it comes from an inherent perception that anything that may be categorised as 'history' must be 100 per cent accurate. Mind you, I have read enough history and met enough historians to know that such a perception is naïve - even fanciful - but nevertheless the thought persists.

I find that I am hindered by the fact that I have never kept a diary - even my appointment diaries were discarded at the end of the calendar year. Whilst I curse my foolishness and lack of vision, I am also mindful of many men who, languishing in jail, curse their foolishness and lack of vision for keeping diaries.

My other bid for your understanding and perhaps even clemency, is based on the fact that I have no staff to research documents and draft a coherent treatise, studded with factual data, revealing an era of achievement and progress.

In the circumstances, I thought I would talk, firstly about my attitude to the job - not to my appointment - but to the job of Chief of the Air Staff. It seemed a good starting point. Then I should like to describe the working environment in the Department of Defence - I speak of the interpersonal relationships - the interface of the three Services, and of the Service and civilian staffs. I think this is necessary in order to understand the ease or difficulty one encountered in achieving goals that were set within one's own Service.

With what time is left, I will speak of some of the defence issues of the time - matters of philosophy, of strategy and policies that emerged from the different perceptions of these vital and yet fundamental issues. Clearly, little of substance can be achieved until those involved can agree on fundamentals.
My views and perceptions did not suddenly appear when I was appointed to be the Chief of the Air Staff. They had formed over many years of Service experience, and from my reading of military history and on the growth of air power. Naturally, they were influenced by my observation of Departmental politics during the 10 years I had spent there between 1969 and 1982, in particular, during the post-Tange report years.

Firstly, I was very much aware of the changed role of CAS that came with the 1975 re-organisation. It really was a vastly different role: from chairman of the Air Board - a Board on which each member had access to the Minister on matters within his own branch - to command of the RAAF. The former branch heads were now members of an advisory committee - the Chief of the Air Staff Advisory Committee (CASAC). This was a very significant increase in the responsibility of the CAS.

But the change extended well beyond the board room of the former Air Board. CAS now commanded the real air force - that is, the air force out in the field, the air force that was there to defend this country. The air force that would fight and die implementing the strategy and using the weapons Canberra provided. These changes had been put in place half a dozen years before I became CAS, and to a large extent the Service had settled down with these new arrangements - but not entirely. There was still a lingering shadow of the old Air Board days in the hearts of the odd divisional head (formerly branch head) and, even more so, in the hearts of their staffs. The two field commanders had tended to become rather independent war lords - resenting any questioning of their actions or decisions - in a most respectful way, of course!

Rightly or wrongly these were my perceptions when I came into the job and I determined to put them right. I suppose you might say this was merely a change in style, but it was necessary to suit my intended exercise of command.

There was, I thought, a marked tendency for divisional heads to come to CASAC meetings, briefed by their staff on the agenda items and with the attitude that they must convince the CAS to do it their way - or their staffs' way (shades of 'yes, minister'). I explained, I think with some patience, that CASAC was there to discuss matters from all aspects, and when the CAS had reached a decision, they would go back to their staffs and advise them of CAS's directives. I warned of the tyranny of the staff officer and related a rather well-known case where an American chief of staff was attending a meeting of the joint chiefs, when a colonel of his staff, sitting behind him to provide information when and if required, passed a piece of paper to the chief, saying 'Sir, you cannot possibly agree to para 2' (of the joint chiefs' paper under discussion). I made it
clear that I did not welcome this approach. This was not in any way to be construed to mean that I did not want advice and to have it put vigorously - even forcefully. But it did mean that they should not find it necessary to argue against the CAS’s proposals simply to appear as winners in the eyes of their staffs.

And indeed, there was the odd cell of resistance that I found intolerable. The first of these - and almost the last - concerned the decision to depart from the long-standing practice of having the whole crew of Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft (LRMPA) commissioned: that is, all sensor operators, flight engineers, etc. We were the only air force in the world to do so.

The former CAS, Air Marshal McNamara, had telephoned me when I was Chief of Joint Operations (CJOP), and asked my views on this proposal. I think we had discussed it informally when I was Chief of Air Force Operations (CAFOPS). I said I favoured the change very strongly. The CAS said he was going to convene a working party to examine the proposal. My response was that I felt confident enough in the matter and would not really see a need to conduct a study. However, Neville McNamara obviously had received other and contrary views and rightly decided on a formal study of the matter. When the study had been completed, the CAS decided to go ahead with a major change in policy. Sensor operators were to be non-commissioned officers, and the RAAF was to have a stream of airmen aircrew.

Later, when I became CAS, I asked what was the status of the airman aircrew scheme my predecessor had directed to be introduced. I was told that it had been reviewed within personnel division, and that a letter would be coming to me recommending that the scheme did not proceed.

I asked to see the staff officer responsible for this review. He came, with his division head, and explained his reasoning. I called a meeting of the CASAC and had all this put to me again, with a strong recommendation by the Chief of Air Force Personnel supporting the view of his staff officer. Really, all the argument put was a regurgitation of previous points put by those opposed to change.

I said that I found it quite extraordinary and unacceptable that a clear directive of the CAS had been disobeyed - whatever euphemism they may wish to explain their action. I directed that an outline of an airman aircrew scheme be put to me by January, and that the first course begin in August next.
A similar thing happened on a much more basic matter - marching. I had spoken to people in the drill and ceremonial section of personnel division and said that the RAAF should revert to the breast-high arm swing of former years. I was given a number of reasons why this should not happen, including extra wear on the uniform - extraordinary - and the fact that army and navy swung arms waist high. Unconvinced by these arguments, I ordered that instructions be sent out to change our form of marching, with immediate effect; and that the drill books be amended in due course. A month later I went to Point Cook to review a parade and was surprised to see the waist-high swing of the arm. I asked the officer commanding if he had not been directed to change this, and he replied that he had no such advice.

On return to Canberra next morning, I called for the staff officer whom I had told to carry out my direction. He explained that after my direction, he decided to discuss it with the warrant officers disciplinary (WODs) within the air force. He was in the process of drafting a minute to me advising against the change. Amongst other things, I told the officer to have a signal despatched to all units by 1400 hours that day, directing a breast-high arm swing, effective immediately.

I relate these incidents to show how essential it is for CAS - or for that matter any commander - to establish his authority on even the most senior of his executives, and even more particularly on their staffs. It is not that this is hard to do, only that it must be done.

On the air force in general, I had some reservations about the standards throughout. My personal assessment was that dress, standards of drill and bearing, standards of discipline, were less than one would expect from an elite force - and this was the essence of my concept of the RAAF, and still is. I am one who believes these outward signs are a manifestation of the professional state of an armed force: that what you see is what you get. I realise that my predecessors may not have seen these things as starkly as myself, or that they may well have considered these as matters for the two field commanders. Certainly, I am not being critical of their method of command, I simply point out the perception and the philosophy of David Evans.

In putting this business of an elite force to you, I realise that there is an unfortunate tendency in some circles of the community to decry elitism, to paint it as undemocratic. These are the individuals whose goal is mediocrity, these are the ones who vehemently criticise such centres of excellence as the Defence Force Academy. But I simply ask, would you not want the surgeon performing major surgery on your daughter or wife to be as elite a surgeon as you could find? Would you not want the
general commanding your son in battle to be amongst the most elite of generals? I had absolutely no compunction in using the word 'elite' in conjunction with the Royal Australian Air Force. It is a force operating at the forefront of aerospace technology, in a medium that is very unforgiving of mistakes.

When talking to units, to training and operational establishments, I used to emphasise this elitism, pointing to the Falklands War as an example, and the elite units the British put in to achieve a most difficult task - royal marines, commandoes, the paratroop regiment. I would invite those to whom I was speaking to recall or to note the performance of these units on parade, as well as at war. In both cases they were magnificent. They were the best and they bore themselves with pride. The RAAF was the equal to such proud formations, and should feel and exhibit the same pride in themselves and in their Service.

There are people here who will doubtless consider this trivia. I do not. The measures I took to promote this pride in Service may seem like trivia, but trivia or not, I believe it was effective. The breast-high arms in marching looked better, was different, it was the Royal Australian Air Force. I note that it has since become the standard for the three Services.

For over 60 years we paraded to the march of the Royal Air Force. That is a wonderful air force and the one in which we had our genesis. Most RAAF officers and many airmen have carried out training with the RAF at some time or another, and there is a close association. However, I thought we should march to our own tune, and I had the then director of music, Squadron Leader Mitchell, compose a RAAF march 'Eagles of Australia'. He sent up three marches for me to select from. My wife and son thought I had suddenly snapped when they heard endless martial music from the rumpus room, and espied me marching around trying it out. Frank Cranston, a defence writer for The Canberra Times, heard the new march and telephoned to tell me he approved. Jokingly, I said, 'Care to write the words?' He said 'send me a tape, I'll have a go'. And so today, you will see on the music programs 'RAAF March: Mitchell/Cranston'.

If drill, dress, and general bearing were going to improve, it would need the enthusiastic support of the warrant officers disciplinary - broadly, the RAAF equivalent of the regimental sergeant major. To some extent they had lost their influence and status. Large RAAF bases had possibly 50 warrant officers of various trades, but whilst all officers, warrant officers, and senior non-commissioned officers had a responsibility, it was the WOD who was specifically responsible for supervising the
standard of dress, drill, bearing, etc. I spoke to graduating courses of WODs, spoke to the SNCOs in sergeants messes on my tours of inspection, and had all WODs issued with a pace stick. This they carried, tucked under their arm. It was clear from a few hundred paces that an individual was a WOD. The WODs themselves felt that their authority and their function had been given a new lease of life and they set about their tasks with good effect.

I noted that Navy and Army had their cars and other transport in distinctive colours, representing their Service. The sight of a gleaming, cared-for vehicle, distinctively representing the Service, brought credit to the Service. Occupants felt some pride in being carried in such vehicles. We in the RAAF had only the white car that was representative of the Commonwealth car fleet and, I suppose, scores of other fleets. I called for a colour scheme for RAAF vehicles and this was introduced in due course. Again, it set us apart from the ordinary. One should not be pedestrian - after all, we were and are an elite force.

There are, of course, miserable souls who will say that this costs something extra. Perhaps so, but it is a trifle. On a large buy it would be negligible. What price do you put on pride and morale?

Several other things were put in place to improve the appearance, to develop pride - forage caps, officer rank removed from the shoulder and put back on the sleeve, the battle jacket.

All of these are, of course, quite useless if one does not demand a high performance. On two occasions, dissatisfied with the standards of parade during base inspections, I informed the officer commanding that I would be back in one month, and if still dissatisfied, I would relieve him of his base command. It had a salutary effect.

Within a year, the standard was excellent and bases were vying with each other to do better. Some got to staging a 'yearly spectacular', such as beating the retreat and inviting the public to observe their standards - they became 10 feet tall. They were proud of themselves and their Service.

I have used discipline, drill and bearing as the most fundamental element in improving standards. I assure you, every other aspect of the operational force was required to show a similar standard.

I directed that promotion exams, which had been deleted some years earlier, be reintroduced. Students from regional countries were invited to
attend our staff college to widen our outlook. I believe RAAF students gained as much as did the foreign students.

I have dwelt on this aspect at some length. Perhaps it is indicative of my basic philosophy on the development of a defence force. That is, the foundation is, the people - their morale, their motivation, from the bottom up.

But I must move on, and describe the working environment that obtained in the Defence Department here in Canberra. I will speak of the total organisation - Defence Central, the Service offices, the joint military - variously referred to, irreverently, as 'the amorphous black sponge' or 'Disneyland south'.

There was, as a direct result of the Tange reorganisation, a significant imbalance between the influence, and I emphasise 'influence', of the military on one hand and the civilian side of the department on the other, no matter how it was dressed up in diagrams and explanations in the Tange report. It was the civilian side that prepared reports and documents for the Minister, the civilian side that prepared agenda items for and wrote up the minutes of all meetings of the senior Defence committees. Civilians also prepared the Defence Force capabilities paper which described the capabilities required by the military to defend Australia.

As Mr Manfred Cross, the Chairman of the Defence Sub-Committee of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade pointed out in his 1987 report, the Secretary is solely responsible to the Minister for the provision of advice on most matters concerning defence policy.¹ Cross noted that the Secretary and his senior officers have privileged access to the Minister and to the information flowing to and from him.

Had the strategic thinking of the military and civilian organisations been the same or even complementary, this imbalance may not have created a confrontational attitude. However, the strategic thinking was miles apart. The military wanted a positive approach to the defence of Australia, a positive strategy. The department asserted that, as there was not an identifiable threat to Australia, it was not possible to develop such a strategy. In place of a strategy, the department implemented the 'core force policy', virtually a policy that said, 'We really don't know what

will be required for the defence of Australia and so will develop some core (basic) skills in most areas of military endeavour'. This was in the eyes of the military - certainly in the eyes of the Air Force - a Clayton's policy; one you have when you really don't have a policy. It made it virtually impossible to make a strategic case for a specific military requirement without it being opposed, and often bitterly, by the Department, on the grounds that it was 'beyond the core force requirement'. On the advice of the Department, as a policy matter, the Minister approved the core force concept as a tool for structuring the Australian Defence Force.

This had been going on for six or so years before I became CAS, but the rift had got no better; if anything it had widened. At the request of Admiral Sir Anthony Synnot, a committee chaired by Mr J.W. Utz was convened to examine the situation.2

I addressed the Utz Committee, explaining the difficulties the military endured. I suggested that the committee call for any 50 files putting forward a submission from one of the Services for a particular equipment - guns, torpedoes, tanks, aircraft, whatever. I suggested that they would not find one that was not opposed by the Force Development and Analysis Division and, no doubt, backed up by the Strategic and International Policy Division. Regrettably, the committee did not do so.

The confrontational situation was exacerbated by an unwillingness to recognise that there was a place for professional military advice, or to accept that there was such esoteric knowledge within the military. This was very difficult for me, and indeed, for any experienced senior soldier or airman to understand. Why did they scoff at such advice?

My personal belief is that jealousy or resentment lay at the base of much of the civilian attitude. Did they resent the paraphernalia that adorned Servicemen and Service establishments? Were they opposed to such adornment as flags on cars, red caps, or just the military ethic? I confess I do not know the answer, but I certainly endured the debilitating effect this had on developing a well-trained, well-equipped, force for the defence of this country.

Perhaps two minor, but indicative incidents will illustrate this point. It was customary for Chiefs of Staff undertaking overseas visits - visiting other air forces - to be accompanied by a staff officer. Invariably the itineraries were very condensed and involved many briefings on classified matters, ranging from intelligence assessments and strategic analyses to

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technological advances. Clearly, it would be infra-dig for a Chief of Staff in the company of very senior host officers to sit taking notes. This was one of the jobs of the staff officer, as well as overseeing transport, travel arrangements etc. Much was done in collaboration with the staff officer of the host country's Chief of Staff.

The Secretary of Defence wrote to the Minister, opposing the Chief of the Defence Force Staff (CDFS) taking a staff officer to the United States for an Anzus conference (in November 1982). The CDFS protested and the Minister allowed an accompanying staff officer. This battle raged for some time. At first Chiefs travelled without staff support, but later the policy was changed to allow a staff officer to accompany a Chief. Why should the Secretary oppose this rather normal procedure? I don't really know, but must put it down to small-mindedness. Mind you, I have never known a departmental head travelling without a member of his department in tow. The action against the Chiefs was more galling as the Chiefs of Staff of third-world countries invited here always brought at least one staff officer and often two, all paid for by the Australian Department of Defence, without a word of criticism from the Secretary.

I recall that during 1983 the Chief of the General Staff (CGS), aware that the commencement of the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) would alter the function of Duntroon, proposed that he move into one of the three large houses, built there in the 1930s, or perhaps the 1920s. Those houses would be occupied in due course by officers of colonel rank, and were quite suitable for a Chief of Staff. CGS had in mind that in due course, the three Chiefs could occupy those houses and, perhaps, with more social intercourse, co-operation would be better served. The Secretary opposed the move, referring it to the Minister in terms of 'privilege'. In other words, he would rather have an officer of colonel rank in one of those army houses, than the Chief of the General Staff. It was easy for Defence Minister Scholes to recoil at such 'privilege', and the CGS's proposal was refused.

The Secretary caused me some temporary embarrassment when the Chief of the United States Air Force was visiting, by refusing to see him. I thought this rather petty. Here, the Chief of the world's most powerful air force could find time to visit Australia and the Royal Australian Air Force, but the Secretary did not have time to talk with him. The Secretary was opposed to the USAF Chief calling on the Minister, but I ignored that and arranged with the Minister directly.

I was appalled at the difficulty I had in getting my view - the Air Force view - to the Minister. He asked defence for briefings on Air Force matters and these briefs went off from Defence Central without the Air
Force or the CAS having the slightest idea of their substance. As I said, I did not keep a diary, but I made a note in an old exercise book - on this matter I wrote: 'The RAAF would be appalled to learn just how little influence their Chief has. However, by various means we are able to develop the force to meet the RAAF concept. It is very much in spite of the civilian sector'.

It is time to end this whingeing and talk of a few issues of the time during my three years as Chief of Staff. Nevertheless, I believe the outline on the civil/military relationships is important in a history conference, where it is important to have an appreciation of the working relationship which obtained at the time. It was not a happy time in Canberra. I stress that I speak of the state of affairs at that time, as is fitting in a history conference. I have no knowledge of the state of the relationship today. There is only time to refer to a few of the many important issues that were addressed during the years 1982-1985.

I have mentioned the airman aircrew scheme. It extended to all airmen aircrew on the P-3C, Caribou, C-130 and helicopters. It has, I believe, been an unqualified success.

It is always interesting to note how some of the best decisions happen by chance, rather than design. The RAAF had been examining, in conjunction with Defence since 1980, the permanent location of the two fighter squadrons to be withdrawn from Butterworth. I had, in fact, been advocating that the RAAF base a fighter squadron in the Northern Territory from the time I was Director of Air Force Plans in 1969. It took 13 years to accomplish. My preference had always been for Tindal. However, in later studies Williamtown, Amberley, Darwin and Tindal were all examined. Whilst I remained firmly wedded to and recommended Tindal to the CAS, the decision in the Defence Force Development Committee went to Darwin. As I recall, the difference in cost was in the order of $100 million, Tindal being estimated at $180 million to accommodate one F/A-18 squadron. That decision had been made when I took over the post of CAS.

A month later, Ian Sinclair succeeded Jim Killen as Minister for Defence. Within weeks he called on each of the Chiefs of Staff to be briefed and to espouse his own general philosophy on defence. In my office, I pointed out on the air staff planning map the location of the various bases. When I got to Darwin, I said, 'That is where our forward fighter squadron (No 75) is to be based. It really should be at Tindal, but we (the Air Force) lost that battle'. The Minister asked why, and I explained the danger of exposure on the coast: no depth to defence against air, sea, or even sapper attack in this cyclone belt. He made no comment, but when
a few weeks later he flew from Darwin down to Tindal in company with CDFS and the Secretary, he asked 'Wouldn't this be a better strategic location for No 75 Squadron?' 'Yes, Minister', was the response, and I got a call to dust off the file on Tindal.

Tindal is now a very fine base, and the home of No 75 Squadron. I would not like you to think the Minister's decision was the end of the battle. We had to fight tooth-and-nail for every brick, for a decent standard of married quarter for decent accommodation. Many things we did not get: covered aircraft shelters to name just one.

Perhaps the next major issue was the aircraft carrier decision, which was certainly a very emotional issue. I was aware of and, indeed, had been involved in the debate on-and-off for many years. The first was the naval air power study carried out by the Central Studies Establishment (CSE). One Air Force officer and one Naval officer were attached to the Establishment to provide technical advice to the scientists doing the study. It was really a major study and cost a great deal of money. The outcome was that for the defence of Australia, land-based aircraft were the preferred option in every scenario examined.

The Government was not prepared to bite the bullet and spent some $6 million on a refit for HMAS Melbourne. Later, in spite of the CSE findings, approval was given to purchase HMS Invincible, but not for the Vertical/Short Take Off and Landing aircraft to operate from it.

After the good performance by British naval forces in the Falklands War, the carrier debate came to the fore again. It was once again the major item on the defence agenda. I have not known of a more thorough examination of a project. I say that because it had been studied for so long and so many times. The Secretary was at pains to give Navy every opportunity to put its case, to dissent at length when it wished. After the Defence Force Development Committee (DFDC) recommendation not to acquire Invincible, the matter was put to the Defence Committee, a most unusual step.

I was opposed to the acquisition of an aircraft carrier, and as the aviator on the DFDC, I suppose I had a major input - after all, we were discussing military aviation and the roles of a carrier in the defence of Australia. I stress that: in the defence of Australia. That was the directive from Government, that was, and is, the mission of the Australian Defence Force.

I was at great pains within myself to be objective, and to ensure that single Service bias should not emerge to influence my judgment. In fact,
on this and, indeed, on some other issues, I engaged in a bit of fantasy. I would imagine myself as an enemy officer, given the responsibility to take a particular action against Australia, and see where my concerns lay. Whichever way I did it, the result was the same.

Firstly, I believed, and still do, that a carrier of the Invincible class is a very vulnerable vehicle. The claim that the ocean is a huge place to hide does not hold much conviction in the days of satellites and modern airborne radar systems. From anti-shipping exercises with Harpoon missile-armed F-111Cs, I was convinced absolutely that the type of carrier would not last a day within range of modern, missile-armed, all-weather aircraft. Unlike the mega-carriers of the US Navy, mini-carriers like Invincible had no airborne early-warning aircraft. Its warning would come from picket ships (themselves an easy and worthwhile target) and from the carrier's own air-defence radar. The carrier's air defence was based on a subsonic aircraft with no look-down shoot-down capability, plus surface-to-air-missiles and a close-in weapons system. It could not withstand a coordinated attack by, say, four missile-carrying aircraft launching their weapons simultaneously from four different directions, at a range of about 60 miles (and no doubt at further ranges as technology advances).

I then considered the offensive capability. It would have a total aircraft complement of 16 aircraft; say six helicopters and 10 Harriers. One would expect it would always be necessary to keep four Harriers aboard for air defence. Therefore, the striking force would be six Harriers. The Harrier could carry a few bombs only about 300 miles in daylight and at subsonic speed - a very dubious capability at a very substantial cost. By comparison, three F-111C aircraft, operating from the security of an Australian base at night, in all weather, could carry a similar weight of attack over a radius of 1000 to 1100 miles.

Air defence of the fleet? Was the fleet to sail around en-masse with the carrier in the middle? Where was the air threat? I could never see the logic of these reasons.

The one pleasing thing is that the Chief of Naval Staff, David Leach, and I remained friends throughout this debate. He knew I was sincere in putting my professional view. I told him I saw the submarine as a very effective and worthwhile weapon system in the defence of Australia, and that I would support Navy's bid for a modern and effective submarine, which I did. I supported Navy strongly in acquiring a first-class helicopter for its frigates, the Seahawk. In fact, Defence Minister Beazley chided me for my strong advocacy of the Seahawk against a lesser-priced competitor, saying that the additional $200 million dollars could have
gone towards Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft. I took that with more than one grain of salt. Mr Beazley had plenty of opportunity to include an AEW aircraft in the program, he simply never got his priorities right.

Let me address command arrangements for the ADF. I was, and remain, very concerned at the arrangements for the command and control of the ADF. I have spoken of the difficult Service/civilian interface. Admiral Synnot - to my mind, one of the finest officers Australia has produced - was also concerned and it was he who persuaded the Minister to have a review carried out. This was the Utz Committee, the Defence Review Committee which I mentioned previously. The outcome was extraordinarily disappointing. Perhaps it can be summed up in the Cabinet submission, drafted by the Secretary for the Minister. The Secretary skated over the civil/military problem as if it did not exist. He called for extra power and authority for the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), but not from his own authority, but from that of the Chiefs of Staff. He implied that this was where the trouble lay. He thought Chiefs of Staff should be consulted only when the Minister, the CDF or the Secretary required their advice. This was an important difference to what was the extant functions of the Chiefs of Staff (committee) to give collective advice on military matters and policy decisions affecting the ADF. The Secretary even intimated that the three single Service organisations were undesirable, stating that 'much remains to be done to resolve our single Service heritage'.

The Service Chiefs were deeply concerned at the Secretary's interpretation of the Utz report. We were angry and frustrated that we had not been consulted during the preparation of the Cabinet submission. After all, it affected the role and functions of the Chiefs of Staff. We met in the office of the CNS and it was agreed that I would write to the Minister on behalf of the three Chiefs pointing out our serious dissent from the document produced by the Secretary. I said that we believed that he and his Cabinet colleagues should be informed of all points of view, including those of the Chiefs of Staff, if they were to make an informed judgment. I was not given the courtesy of a reply.

The matter was worthy of searching examination. Australia had never exercised the highest level of command in war, unless you would describe our three-ship contribution to the (1991) Gulf War such an event. I would not, but in any case we even then got it wrong - but I am talking history. Contrary to the intentions of Admiral Synnot when he called for a review of the command and control arrangements, the Utz Committee did nothing to resolve the civilian/military problem. It was a major disappointment.
About this time the Chiefs examined the technical side of interfacing the major headquarters - ADF, Air, Maritime and Land Headquarters. We sought an automated system that would enable any of them to assume the role of the others, particularly HQADF in the event of it being put out of action for any reason. In other words, the purpose was to provide a significant degree of redundancy. I bring this up because I am somewhat amazed to hear of plans to collocate the three functional headquarters. What a wonderful target.

In this talk I have pointed out the basics of my perceptions for getting the RAAF to the status of the elite force I believed it should be and be seen to be. I emphasised, perhaps over-emphasised, the personnel aspects, but in my view it is people that distinguish the elite from the ordinary in the first instance. Many other matters merit comment if time were not a factor. Regrettably it is the constant enemy. But for that constraint, we could have covered energy conservation, operational performance, women in the Services, open reporting (confidential reports), Butterworth withdrawal and future deployments to Malaysia, maritime command and control, rationalisation, etc. So much to cover if time allowed.

Perhaps having belaboured the negative points of the working environment in Canberra, it is necessary to give some explanation of how Air Force managed to progress - and progress we did.

The main factor was that we, the Air Force, knew where we were going. We had a concept of operations in which we had confidence. We preached it throughout the Service. In particular, the higher echelons in Air Force office and the commands were totally dedicated to the direction we had to take to structure the RAAF to implement that concept - to deter and, if that failed, to fight. We were ahead of the other Services and far ahead of the Department of Defence. I do not believe the others had a concept of any substance at all. When we submitted ours to Defence and got no recognition, I called on Army and Navy to produce a concept but this was never done. Because of the carrier debate I pushed Navy particularly, but got nothing more than vague references to a 'Plan Blue'. I never did learn what 'Plan Blue' was about. Army merely said that it did not accept that Air Force and Navy could prevent enemy forces landing on our shores, and therefore Army would be required to hold, stabilise, and then evict such enemy forces.

Undeterred, Air Force stuck to its own professional assessment of our strategic situation. Not only did we preach it in-house, but we also spread the word at every opportunity. I made a point of taking a copy of our concept of operations to Minister Beazley when he was Minister for
Transport and Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence. I attached a quote from John Curtin made in 1937, in which he said that the future defence of Australia would be in the aeroplane and a ring of air bases around our coast. Mr Beazley seemed to accept the logic of our strategic concept. Also, when Paul Dibb left Defence to take up a position at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, I briefed him and gave him a copy of our concept. I had a set of air staff planning maps made up and sent over to his new office. I had previously done the same for Professor Robert O'Neill.

I preached our concept to every body and organisation that asked me to speak and at the many press conferences that were arranged while I was CAS. I covered it again when speaking at the National Press Club a month or so before my retirement. Always I would cover the force structure required and refer to the major deficiencies: AEW&C aircraft and air-to-air tankers.

After an air defence exercise in Darwin in 1983 I held a very well attended press conference and among other things made the claim that a fleet such as the British had used in the Falklands could not survive within 500 miles of the Australian shore, and I explained why. Such a fleet could not protect itself against F-111s, P-3Cs and F/A-18s, all armed with Harpoon type missiles and all having an all weather, day/night capability. On return to Canberra the CDFS telephoned and said he had read the press reports and assumed I had been misquoted. I said 'No', the press statements were accurate and conveyed what I had intended. He said he would not have made such a statement. That was the end of the matter.

I tell this because I believe it was in this way that we, the Air Force, sowed the seeds of our defence concept. Whilst our concept was accorded no recognition, it came to pass eventually that Paul Dibb was appointed to review the force structure requirements of the ADF (Minister Beazley was clearly dissatisfied with the lack of direction given by the Department). I spoke to Mr Beazley soon after Dibb had been appointed and we discussed the likely outcome. He said, 'A man would be a damn fool to appoint someone to do a study if he did not have a good idea of the outcome'. Whilst I disagree with much of what Dibb reported, the grand strategy, that is the prevention of a lodgment on our shores, was in line with the Air Force concept of 10 years earlier. The core force policy had gone forever. I believe that we had sown seeds that had germinated in some influential minds.

Perhaps this is why I was able to write in my exercise book at the end of 1983, 'The RAAF would really be appalled to learn just how little
influence their Chief has. However, by various means we are able to develop the force to meet the RAAF concept - it is very much in spite of the civilian sector.

The same sowing of a seed got Tindal rather than Darwin developed as our major northern base. I thought my last throw of the dice, telling Minister Sinclair of my preference for Tindal, had failed when his only response was to ask why and then take it no further. But again the seed had fallen on fertile ground.

There are obviously many other things of interest that came to pass in my years, but time does not permit further reflection. Rationalisation, women in the Services, confidentiality of personnel reports, the Falklands conflict, naval fixed-wing aviation, the northern airfields, Derby and Cape York, the four Ministers - Killen, Sinclair, Scholes and Beazley. Perhaps it is as well to stop right here.

DISCUSSION

**Mr R. LeMercier:** I am very interested, Air Marshal, in how much scope you had to finance something within the Air Force budget. For example, you said that at one stage you wanted an airman aircrew training scheme operating within 90 days. That kind of thing obviously costs some money. My question also applies to things like changing uniforms, bringing in forage caps, and so on. How much scope did you have, apart from major equipment, to do things as you wanted to as the Chief Executive of the RAAF?

**Air Marshal Evans:** Virtually none. I had a budget for travel and subsistence, allowances, that kind of thing, and that was all I had direct control over. It didn't cost anything to come up with the plan for the aircrew scheme, and when it was put into effect it didn't cost any more than the existing method for training airmen aircrew. There was no real financial penalty or gain one way or the other - there might have been a slight gain in theory but in practice it was about the same.

But as the Chief of Staff I had no scope for using money that hadn't been already bid for and processed and approved through the system. To change the uniform, for instance, I would had to have gone to the [Defence] Centre and ask for money specifically for that purpose. Indeed, to get funds, we had to make offsets, cut out items of equipment. To pay for the uniform change - and I've forgotten the exact details - we gave one
less shirt, or something like that; there had to be an offset. I believe things have changed, and Ray Funnell might be able to comment.

**Air Marshal Funnell:** Yes, things have changed considerably, particularly with the flexibility associated with program management and budgeting and all that comes with it. Also some other things have changed. The purchase of our Boeing 707s numbers five and six was an interesting example. We had learned of the availability of three aircraft at short notice for a very low cost. Firstly, I mentioned it to CDF, and then I went to see Minister Beazley, who was very much taken by the idea and immediately decided to work it through Cabinet. It was only then that we went to the civilian side of the Defence organisation. We had a different DepSec B at the time, but his response to my minute informing him of what was going on was that he could not possibly support the proposal until I had answered a list of 32 questions he came up with. To this day he hasn't got an answer to Question 1, and the aircraft have been in the RAAF inventory for some years.

**Air Marshal Evans:** I wish I had had the same fellow to deal with.

**Air Marshal Newham:** David, you touched on civilian control of the military which was very much a feature of the American philosophy and the American constitution. Would you like to say something a little more about its application at Russell Hill. I found when I was in Washington that the Secretary of Defence, who was of course a political appointee, saw himself as being very close to the military. When I was Chief and the question of the civilian control of the military came up, I used to say to the public servants, 'Civilian control of the military resides over the lake in the Parliament, with the politicians, not here with the public servants'.

**Air Marshal Evans:** Yes, with that, when people talk about the military having command, they often mention the example of Cromwell, but they forget that Cromwell was a politician turned general, not a general turned politician.

**Air Marshal Funnell:** If I could just add something to the civilian control of the military. It's something that I've thought about for a long time and I've written on it as well. The civilian control of the military is embedded in democracies. No society can call itself truly democratic that doesn't have civilian control of the military. Unfortunately - and this is emphasised more in Australia than anywhere else that I've read of or studied - civilian control which should be political control, has come to mean to many people here, Public Service control of the military. That is not the democratic principle, that is not what is intended and that is always going to cause difficulties.
Air Vice-Marshal R.W. Bradford: I would like to add to that. My readings on the subject have shown that it's civil control of the military. 'Civil' means of the people, meaning Parliamentary, not Public Service. A lot of people don't understand that the civilian doesn't necessarily exercise civil control of anything. It's the elected politician who exercises that control, not the public servant.

Air Marshal Evans: But our arrangements as they existed, and still do exist, allow the civilian hierarchy privileged access to the Minister. This is where the military misses out. It is how the civilian element has enhanced influence which has the effect of a de facto control. That point was made several years ago in a report tabled by Manfred Cross when he was Chairman of the Defence Sub-Committee of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade.3

Air Vice-Marshal Bradford: We talked about assuming authority without having the responsibility to go with it. A good example occurred some years ago when I was at Butterworth. We had about 1200 married quarters on lease. The rental ceilings for those quarters were set by a Department of Defence civilian who had no authority to do that, but he was the man to whom everybody turned to ask, 'Is that OK?'. And in fact the military in Butterworth were under rental ceilings that were less than half of those for the public servants - the school teachers - there. As a consequence, we had all sorts of arguments, but we didn't get anywhere in Defence until we found out that it was one of the Deputy Secretaries who'd taken it upon himself to be the arbiter of what we could use as a rental ceiling in Butterworth. He had no authority to do that whatsoever and when we ignored his authority, of course, he got very angry as other DepSecs used to. But we all know about that.

Air Vice-Marshal G.J. Beck: Sir, I'd like your views on the notion of command of the ADF versus the Chiefs of Staff Committee concept, and also your experience as principal adviser to the Minister. How was it in your day? What access did you have to the Minister? How did you use that, how might it have changed with previous commanders under the Chiefs of Staff concept? In other words, how has the role of the Chiefs changed with the introduction of command of the ADF by CDF?

Air Marshal Evans: I am strongly opposed to one man commanding the Australian Defence Force. I think it is wrong. Perhaps I'm influenced by looking back at the people who have held the job of Chairman, or Chief of

3 See footnote 1.
the Defence Force Staff, or Chief of the Defence Force. I'd have to say that those individuals do not suggest that therein lies the centre of military intelligence and brilliance in Australia. We've had a couple of real duds and I'm not going to name them, of course, but I'm sure if you were thinking about it we'd come up with the same names.

I am opposed to the system because one man has no strength by himself. As individuals they are there trying to second guess the Minister, and they can be got rid of at the drop of a hat or their tenure not extended. By contrast, no Minister or Government is going to have the Chiefs of Staff sacked as a collective body because they don't agree with the Minister. I'm not at all suggesting that the Chiefs should criticise Government policy, but they are not there to be apologists for that policy or to say that things are good when they are not. If the Chiefs are in effect a small Cabinet of their own then they have strength; as individuals they do not. We have a CDF who can call for the advice of the Chiefs of Staff when he feels like it or to ignore it as he sees fit. I think the Minister has a right to get the collective advice of the Joint Chiefs. After all, a decision to go war or to deploy people or put people into Somalia or wherever it might be, is a political decision and is made by the Minister and often by Cabinet. That is where the decision is made and it is far better for the Defence Force to speak with strength to the Minister. If the Government doesn't agree, well they'll go against the collective advice of their Chiefs of Staff, the Joint Chiefs. But with a CDF they have only the advice of one man. They do not necessarily know the views of the other Chiefs of Staff. This is wrong. It gives the CDF too much authority and too much power to use or misuse. I think we would be better off, we would wage a better battle for resources with politicians, if we had the Joint Chiefs proffering advice.

Turning to the second part of your question. How much access did I have to the Minister? I didn't have much access on important things. It was surprisingly difficult to get to the Minister, and it got worse and worse. In the case of Minister Scholes, if a corporal WAAF had written to him saying she wanted a posting, he could spent half an hour telling me why she should be posted where she wanted to go. However, if I wanted to speak to him about something like early warning aircraft I couldn't get to see him or I might get five minutes. As I said, I wrote in my diary when I was CAS that the members of the RAAF would have been appalled to know how difficult their Chief found it to get access to and influence the Minister. With Beazley things started off quite well. I could get to see Beazley reasonably, but then in the end Defence were intervening and he got into the habit of going directly to the Chief of the Defence Force and I found it hard to get to him. Sinclair was perhaps the easiest and the most understanding. If I had to nominate who I found to be the
best Minister, it would be Sinclair. That comes as a surprise to me because I thought Beazley had all the makings of the best Minister, the best grounding in defence. He'd studied it as an academic and had some strategic views, but in my view, he used the military for Kim Beazley and his party, not for the military or Australia. He became commander-in-chief. It was very sad to see a politician become commander-in-chief. He was so overpowering that he ran, and was allowed to run, I believe, the Chiefs of Staff and the Chief of the Defence Force.

For those reasons I don't like the present system. I want to see the Joint Chiefs responsible to the Minister and for planning military operations so that the Minister gets the collective advice as used to happen.

**Mr J. Trinder:** When the troops were looking at problems, looking from the bottom up, they always felt it was within the authority of their officers and the Chief of the Air Staff to fix things. If things were wrong they looked to their officers. From the point of view of officers in the Department of Defence, we would put up a case that seemed so plainly worthwhile that you would think its obvious virtue, its commonsense, would carry the day. Obviously that didn't always happen. Another important authority, namely my wife, says that Air Force officers always got what they deserved because they never fought for anything themselves, they always expected someone else to do their fighting for them. How difficult was it, from Air Force Office point of view, from the Chief of the Air Staff position, to fight for things that were plainly commonsense? Was anyone over there listening? Did the force of your argument ever carry the day against the opposition from the Department; and did the Department always oppose, not only in the big things like equipment acquisition, but in the small things like conditions of service? It seemed to me we never got a positive response from anything we ever sent over there.

**Air Marshal Evans:** Well, I think your summing up is right. Of course, the staff officers within the Air Force Office and the other Service Offices fought as valiantly as they could and they certainly worked hard. Many arguments which I would have thought were irrefutable were refuted. I was strongly opposed to the adversarial way personnel issues were decided, because I didn't want this sort of thing creeping into the Service. I didn't know how far it would go or where it would end.

What I thought would be the saviour in personnel matters was the Defence Force Tribunal, which would be independent of the Government and would hand down legally binding judgments. I did not realise that the Government would fight so fiercely against our submissions to the Defence Force Tribunal. I thought it would be a good thing that CDF
could go to the Tribunal whenever he wanted to or thought it necessary. I didn't foresee that there would be occasions when the Chief of the Defence Force wouldn't support his troops, and wouldn't put forward the view from out in the field that conditions of service should be improved. The Defence Force Tribunal has turned out, to me, to be a great disappointment. I don't think it's attributable to any lack of fighting by people in Air Force Office or any of the Service offices. If you've worked there you would know. What can you do but go to committees and argue, and then get outvoted at the end of it and have your argument rejected? Or if that doesn't happen, the matter is put off for review or another study, and so 12 months or two years goes by. I don't know what more can be done under the present system. It is the system which needs to be changed.
Chief of the Air Staff, my colleagues and friends. I am not too sure what inspired me to agree to this plot by the historians to do their devilling for them. We've had a very good sample so far of it all hanging out and I expect there's more to come.

I'll talk about my policies and a little about what happened during my time as Chief. The main events were the Dibb review, although there were other reviews; the transition from the Dibb review to the Defence White Paper which was published in 1987; and the transfer of the helicopters. A number of things that I was going to talk about have been said before, some of my pet hates, so I'll try to edit them as I go along.

When I was young and knew a lot more than I know now, I had clear ideas of what the Chief of the Air Staff should get on with and should fix up. By the time I got to Staff College, I had it stitched up, and indeed, my assessments throughout that year did indicate that I knew more than the average student. So much so, that my final assessment was that I probably had a rank or two left in me, that I was not recommended to come back to be on the directing staff of the Staff College (and the Commandant said something like, 'And you can take that stupid grin off your face because 79 per cent of those who've served since the war have been similarly not recommended'). Anyway, I was spared having ever to return to the Staff College and teach a bunch of know-alls, which is the term that seemed to pervade the assessments I got at the College. At that time I don't think any of the directing staff had the faintest idea that I might become Chief. It was certainly beyond my expectations.

My approach is considerably different from David Evans' and I think it will be a little different from Ray Funnell's. I'll say at the outset though that I was very much identified with the policies of my predecessors, Sir Neville McNamara and David Evans.

A number of things that impressed me early in my Service life had a great influence on my contributions in the senior policy areas, where I served as Director-General of Operational Requirements, Chief of Air Force Operations, DCAS and CAS.
In Korea I was very much struck by unnecessary attrition. My first missions were supposed to be reconnaissance, where we didn’t shoot at anything. Late one afternoon a pair of aircraft became available and I was assigned to fly with Flight Lieutenant Mike Whitworth-Jones, a gung ho RAF officer. We flew up past Pyongyang and he showed me enemy gun locations by arranging for them to shoot at us.

Quite late in the afternoon he called 'There are two trucks on that bend in the road, let’s go down and smack them'. It was gloomy, I couldn’t see the trucks, so I stood back and watched him line up. We carried a mix of SAEHP and HE1 for the cannon so I was able to see the strikes. As he pulled off I lined the Meteor up and I was very pleased I hit these dark lumps parked off the surface of the road. As I pulled up and was looking for my lead aircraft, interesting fireworks zoomed over the top of my canopy. I then remembered that I was supposed to call 'flack' - we were briefed to do that - so I pushed the microphone button and I called 'flack', and my voice broke, and this very cultured British voice responded, 'Call-sign and clock code please'.

At the debrief Mike Whitworth-Jones claimed two trucks which puzzled me a bit because no bits flew off and I didn’t see any fire. I was a bit quiet over the whole business, but I was quite impressed with my first trip, especially as I hadn’t got scratched. A very wise operations officer had a word with me afterwards and asked 'What went on?'. I told him and he said, 'Mike knows that he’s not supposed to go shooting at isolated trucks because the pay-off between a Meteor (I was thinking about the priceless pilot inside) and a couple of trucks is not worthwhile. It is their habit, the sneaky chaps, to put a tarpaulin over a burnt out shell and making it look like a worthwhile target - but it’s a flack trap'.

A number of other things struck me in Korea. One was passive defence. I was a sergeant pilot, and hadn’t read about the principles of passive defence. It was extraordinarily difficult to find and get at quite a lot of the targets. That experience confirmed the value of dispersal, camouflage, concealment and hardening, and pointed to the importance of reconnaissance for the successful prosecution of strikes of any sort. The pervasive air superiority, indeed, supremacy, that we enjoyed was also important. I was impressed also, of course, by the value of anti-aircraft guns in all forms. The enemy had 12.7s, 37mm and 90mm radar predicted, plus infantry weapons which proved quite effective on a number of occasions.

I mentioned attrition. In the time I completed my training in Japan and six months in Korea, we lost probably 10 aircraft. We lost three of the six Royal Air Force pilots in the month of March, plus one Australian
pilot killed, plus another taken POW, plus Bill Monaghan who had to crash-land on an island, plus an RAF officer called Coleman who had to eject close to the airfield, his aircraft was in such bad shape. Ground fire, in what we would now call primitive form, was quite effective. This was the latter stages of the Korean War when our task was to apply air pressure on the enemy; most of our targets didn't justify the air effort; the ground position was static throughout this period.

From Korea I was posted to 78 Wing in Malta. I had read the history of Malta which probably had more bombs dumped on it per acre than elsewhere in Europe. I was impressed by how the air units defending the island had been able to continue the fight. It was the epitome of the application of the principles of passive defence. We were based at Takali, a wartime fighter airfield, and I was able to walk the ground, examine the revetments, and talk to people who'd been there, and discover the full importance of passive defence for the preservation of assets.

Later, as a flight and squadron commander I learned that any asset the other chap has must be taken into account. I'd spent most of my time on air defence exercises sitting in cockpits waiting for something to happen, and next to us was No 30 Squadron with its old Mark 1 Bloodhound surface-to-air missiles, which we used to call the petrified forest because of inherent performance limitations. When I got the command of No 3 Squadron, we were tasked to test the air defences at Darwin. We looked at the Red-Eye missile which had some operational limitations, we looked more closely at Bloodhound, and we found that we were denied substantial operational flexibility. I think that kind of experience is very important when you come to frame policies on operational requirements and procedures.

So, over many years in air defence I hungered for operational flexibility, I hungered for the option of being able to grasp the initiative, and I think this coloured a lot of my thinking and my input to the Dibb review. By the time I had reached Staff College I was certainly very taken with three principles of war: offensive action, surprise and concentration of effort. These were pretty firmly fixed in my mind as the winning combination. I modified that view as I became older and wiser, and appreciated the importance of the other principles of war, particularly administration. I don't think we pay enough attention to administration. The lesson is logistics, logistics, logistics. There are so many stories - for example, Rommel in Africa, Patton in Europe - of how they ran out of options because their logistics system didn't keep up or wasn't available to them.

Yet in our concept of operations we bragged about the flexibility of air power, about how one day we could run maritime strikes out of Derby
and on the next air defence exercises out of Darwin or Tindal. This is all very well provided spares, fuel and munitions are in place. Australia is a dreadful continent for logistic support, and furthermore a satisfactory answer to the question of a stock holding policy could not be pried out of the Department of Defence. Without a coherent stock holding policy it is difficult to get on with planning within the Air Force on how to deploy, how to expand and how to operate in the field.

War stocks were always a problem. We tried hard to get holdings of respectable proportions but the only way we could hold 'war stock' weapons was to fudge on our training requirement of live rounds. We'd put training rounds aside, treat them as war stocks, and fire them only when they were reaching their shelf life. What I found deplorable was the 'she'll be right Jack' attitude; that if something happened somehow the full range of weapons would materialise.

This was a major frustration. I'll give you an interesting example. In the Force Structure Committee we were trying to get a few extra Harpoon missiles to meet Navy's ships' outfits requirements, plus a few in reserve. The Assistant Secretary FDA opined that as we possessed 72 Harpoons that would be sufficient to knock out all of the ships of all of the neighbourhood navies, so we didn't need any more. He'd overlooked that the 72 Harpoons were of little utility if locked away in ships' magazines deployed hither and thither around Australia. The weapons would not be available unless reserves were held and air launch kits were on hand. The total problem was never addressed, and without its resolution our conceptual bragging about the flexibility of air power was false.

I recall the advertisements in The Pacific Defence Reporter about why we should buy the Harrier for the Air Force because 'every cow pasture is a Harrier field'. When I talked with the Royal Air Force - who, unlike our situation in the north of Australia, enjoy the support of a substantial European infrastructure of road and railway - about the Harrier, they pointed out to me it wasn't so easy to operate in their environment because on each day of operations on the European Central Front the Harrier would consume five times its own weight in fuel and munitions. That raises another point on logistics: that we have to take into account the high consumption rates of mature rates of effort.

By the time I was appointed CAS I was less confident in my ability to implement the policies I'd framed back in 1964. I'd had three solid years of experience in the Force Structure Committee and a year as DCAS deputing for my boss. I also remember being sent to Israel in 1979 to have a look at their AAR tanker modification and concepts of operations. It was one the great visits of my life as a staff officer: the Israelis had
more match practice than anybody around at the time. The experience gave me confidence in operational judgments.

The authority of CAS was there as the present Chief mentioned in his opening, but its exercise in terms of manpower and force structure was severely shackled. The authority of the office exists within the Air Force, where there was rarely any trouble. Some of the problems mentioned by David Evans were evident to me, such as passive resistance - times where staff officers would delay action because their views differed. That was a bit more difficult than active resistance to ferret out but we could deal with it once it was located. Computer monitoring of projects, directives, etc, promised a solution.

The demands of the Centre [the Department of Defence] were expensive on staff and often inefficient. I found a large number of supporting staff were focused not on the Air Force but on the Centre. They were in a response mode, and there was little we could do to grab the operational initiative. The committee system ground on, supporting paper work arrived later and later, leaving little time for staff analysis. Furthermore, the Centre expanded. With each new desk in the chain the 'trolleyologist' would take an extra day for delivery. It could take up to a week before each person in the chain had read a document and quizzed the originator because he lacked the knowledge to comprehend the contents - need I go on. Indeed, when we looked at our acquisition processes two years after the CS&S changes, they'd increased from three weeks to five. A 66 per cent increase in two years, and that's a minor item or spare part I'm talking about, not a major equipment acquisition.

One thing David Evans didn't mention was that he as CAFOPS was very much responsible for taking the initiative when we were trying to develop an ADF concept of operations, but couldn't get the cooperation we needed from the other Services and the Centre. So he wrote and finally published an Air Force concept of operations which went out under the signature of the then CAS, Air Marshal McNamara. It turned out that while the paper was never officially recognised, it was well regarded. Subsequently, Air Marshal Funnell worked on it in various staff positions he held before he became Vice Chief of the Defence Force. I know a number of other people were in the chain, but David Evans deserves the credit for getting that document onto the streets and Ray Funnell for giving it tremendous impetus afterwards. I was delighted to be party to the process.

Throughout my period as CAS we pushed very hard for completion of the chain of northern strategic airfields. There were some minor hiccups,
but there was a lot of support, especially from Defence Minister Beazley. We also continued to develop the NADACS (National Air Defence and Air Space Control System) concept. Air defence had been through so many studies. The only problem with the development of NADACS was that there was a view in the minds of others that Air Force was against Over-the-Horizon-Radar (OTHR). Nothing was further than the truth. Given the immense size of the problem - 3000 to 4000 miles across the top of the country - we had to have something like OTHR, and nobody wanted it more than Air Force.

Despite our active support, it was difficult getting it into the head of Force Development and Analysis (FDA) that RAAF wanted OTHR. I suppose there's only one thing more difficult than getting a good idea into some heads, and that's getting a stupid one out. It became part of the mythology that we were against OTHR. It was believed that the Air Force wanted AEW&C instead of OTHR, when in fact we wanted both. But we couldn't get the message through, even though our DPs made a sound case for microwave radars, OTHR and airborne early warning as complementary systems, not either/or systems. Departmental politics produced an argument investing OTHR with capabilities the system could not achieve. And to compensate for lack of precision in the system, the F-18 radar capability was given an edge we knew did not exist.

The other defence deficiency or national deficiency for which Air Force sought correction was our internal road and rail infrastructure. At a conference on the subject the Director-General of Movements was savaged by the then CGS most unfairly, I thought. As you know the Northern Territory Government wants to get the north-south railway line completed for commercial reasons, while the present Federal Government won't agree as it's an expensive project. We could see, and I'm sure our soldiers could see, that a decent rail/road system with upgraded east-west roads was important to lessen the logistic problem. We could not agree with the Navy's argument that sea transport would fill the gap. To me, taking our supply lines that much closer to enemy attack would be stupid, and would expose our merchant ships to a multiple threat environment: sub-surface, surface and air. At least our internal infrastructure, unless there's a landing, is subject only to air attack, and it can be repaired, unlike a ship which is lost. I don't think we'll see any improvement until there's a political or commercial benefit.

I also wanted to enunciate a very clear understanding of the RAAF's responsibility to support the other Services. There were a lot of negative stories around at the time; some of them might have been justified but a lot were not. I'm pleased to say that I had no problem with RAAF
Commanders at that time and the only limitations on supporting the other two Services were the lean resources both in capital equipment and ongoing costs we were given to do the job. Time and time again I said in committee, give RAAF the resources and we'll do the job. The will was there and I believe this was demonstrated in exercises which I visited in 1985 and 1986. That was why I was disappointed later on when the helicopter debate came up. I'll discuss the helicopter transfer later.

I encouraged the continued restructuring of Support Command that had been going on for several years as a result of the Hargraves review. What was left was to sort out Air Force Office. We had too much duplication, both engineering and logistics, between Air Force Office and Support Command, and because our teeth-to-tail ratio was poor, because of the need to introduce efficiencies, we had to get as many functions as possible out of Air Force Office into the field. There's a tendency in this country to think that everything has to be in Canberra, and I often wonder why.

For some time there had been discussion about restructuring Operational Command, to better suit the new command arrangements at the Centre. Two Chiefs of Staff at HQOC, Air Commodores Turnbull and Westmore, produced the template for the current Air Command organisation. When Air Vice-Marshal Radford went up as the AOC, he put the plan to me and I let CASAC look at it. The reaction was interesting as the vested interests and resistance to change emerged. Many couldn't envisage an organisation that didn't have a man commanding a base and everything on the base being responsible to him.

Unknown to those in opposition, my successor and I had a good knowledge of how the United States Air Force worked. I remember when I started our F-111 operation at McClelland Air Force Base I saw a chap who I thought was next to their Base Commander and asked, 'Who's the boss here, who do I report to?'. He said, 'There's a guy who runs the weather wing over there, and there's a guy who runs the maintenance outfit here (an outfit about as big as the Royal Australian Air Force), you run your outfit and that's it, this is just an airfield any outfit can use'. I thought, 'What a novel idea: no territorial war lord with a variety of functions under his command; each unit responsible to its functional commander wherever located'. Having heard the doubters, I authorised the AOC to introduce the system on a trial basis. I think Sir Humphrey Appleby would have been proud of me. The plan stuck and it's been developed very well.

Before I left the job I'd talked to the planning staff about getting on with the study of how to mobilise, how to deploy and how to expand. We
needed to know the processes but were frustrated by being run out of staff effort. (There were times I complained in the Centre that it seemed to be a concerted program.) I wanted to examine extraordinary measures to sustain operations, such as using many Support Command resources, perhaps temporarily closing down the flying training establishments as one way of getting a second and third operational shift. We need to study those kinds of concepts and test their legitimacy.

I've referred to the development of the conceptual papers and the military studies that were going on in Defence and some good papers had come out of that process. But this process didn't seem to be satisfactory to Minister Beazley. So, overlapping those Defence studies, the Minister contracted Mr Paul Dibb to study our military capabilities and make recommendations; and this was to be followed by a White Paper. Mr Dibb had two staff appointed to him, one from Strategic and International Policy (SIP) and one from FDA, plus an Army colonel for liaison. His review went into 1986 and the White Paper was published in 1987. I don't believe that the Service input to that process was fully appreciated.

Mr Dibb and his staff visited all our bases and I give him great credit for that. He at least found out how all of the force elements worked and they gave him quite generously of their time. Mr Dibb's base visits were quite an innovation. My predecessor had told me to get the people from the Centre - the strategists and the analysts - out to find out how the Air Force worked. So I laid on an aeroplane at his request about three times, and filled it every time with typists and 'trolleyologists'. The other people from the Centre were too busy to go, so their ideas were never contaminated by exposure to the real military life. That's where I join Air Marshal Evans in a criticism of some people who held important positions in the Centre. Their knowledge was deficient in the prosecution of military operations.

Initially Dibb produced a draft of his review, followed by five or six iterations, each of which went to the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC). The drafts were argued, sometimes over several days. Our staffs had worked over them for much longer periods than that, of course.

Some points on the Dibb review. Firstly, the contribution to this review by the Chiefs, as I said, was never publicly acknowledged and, I can assure you that from the first iteration through to the last there were substantial changes. I think Paul Dibb would be very embarrassed if some of the earlier drafts were to hit the street. I've said this to him before and I was rather hoping he would be here today. I think the
changes and improvements to his review followed our persuasiveness and also his visits to bases, and this is to his credit.

In general, I applauded the review. The Defence strategy proposed by Dibb shared many of the concepts of operations which the RAAF had been promoting since the 1970s. However, it was my view that while Dibb's proposed strategy was sound, it reflected an incomplete understanding of the application of air power, and consequently reached some questionable judgments on priorities.

Those judgments seemed like classic FDA input. Indeed, my comment about the first draft of Dibb's review was that it was an FDA paper. The priorities it established came back to haunt the RAAF because of the way FDA tried to apply them later on. A low priority was accorded to overland strike while a high priority was accorded to maritime strike. Anybody in the business of conducting military operations will know that the ability to prosecute one of those operations confers the ability to do the other. I stated then that before we ever got into the business of maritime strike, it would generally be prudent and more effective to engage in some land strikes. Not everyone agreed with me, particularly FDA.

My general argument with those early drafts of the Dibb review was that they were two dimensional. They talked about land situations and maritime situations, and at no time was the pervasiveness of the air recognised. I did not succeed in getting the third dimension inserted into the Dibb review, at least not to the extent I would have liked.

The guidance giving priority to low level contingencies, while recognising that escalation could occur, led to some unusual interpretations. For example, it was stated at one committee meeting that the ADF's weapons and force structure were completely inappropriate to guidance, that is, to the emphasis on low level contingencies. I quipped, 'What do you think we should have, riot guns and plastic shields?', and I wasn't too far from what the staffer who had made the comment was thinking about. He couldn't see that the full range of military weapons would be needed in most low-level contingencies, and this myopic view pervades probably to this day, I'm afraid.

The RAAF's view - and I know my Army and Navy colleagues supported it - was that the full kit of weaponry across the ADF was applicable in low level contingencies. It doesn't take that much thinking to conclude that these capabilities are essential if distance is to be conquered and high casualties avoided. An important feature of these capabilities is their deterrent effect on escalation. I make the point that to run down
any one element of the Air Force would open a window of vulnerability. Dibb's emphasis on low level conflict was later used by FDA to forestall development of the F-111. Indeed, at one stage FDA tried to get rid of it; the proposal was that the tactical fighter force would fill the gap. I felt that we really needed to find somebody to preach the Sermon on the Mount again (loaves and fishes) because we had only about 70 fighters.

Similarly, in the Army the requirements for artillery and armour were questioned by FDA on the same grounds, and even with my limited knowledge of land operations, I was appalled. The Navy was also affected. The size of the major surface warship acquisition recommended by Dibb was in the order of a corvette. Any of you who've had any experience with the patrol boats - and my experience was with the older Attack class - know that there are some sea states where you don't do anything with the ship, you don't eat, you don't sleep, you just hang on. You certainly don't fight. It didn't appeal to me to be putting Australian Servicemen into inadequate ships. I have some reservations about surface combatants, they do have limitations, but they're important. Indeed, I'm a supporter of the Anzac frigates as they are now, even though they cost a lot of money.

The Dibb review also had problems with offensive capabilities and being able to take the operational initiative. It was because Australia has a defensive strategy that the Dibb review advanced the opinion that we didn't need an offensive capability. This interested CGS and CNS as much as it did me. It took some argument to disabuse the Dibb team of that idea; to explain to them that even in a defensive environment one must have an offensive capability. Such was the meagre amount of knowledge that existed at the expert analyst level. I hope you're not still having problems with that notion but it was an article of faith with FDA at the time.

The time was that I thought the Dibb review my life's work as CAS, but I consoled myself with the view that the committee routine might be reduced. Unfortunately, words mean all things to all men and we had to keep going over the same business and fighting the same issues, even though I'd thought they'd been disposed of at previous meetings. Let me give you an example.

In keeping with tradition, when I came back from America and was installed as DCAS, the Chief went away on a trip. Before he left he said, 'There's a Force Development Committee meeting on Thursday, would you hold the fort for me'. Of course, there were two major Air Force projects and the budget on the agenda. The staff pumped me up and I trudged across the exercise yard there with my arm nearly coming out of
its socket from the weight of papers. The first item was an Army project, and as it unfolded I thought, 'I haven't been away. It's the same words, it's the same status'. There we were two years down the track repeating the pantomime.

In the three posts that I held in Air Force Office, I got thoroughly tired of the committee process. We went over the same ground time and time again. Yet exactly where projects are in the Five Year Program means little until they reach the Budget Year. Nevertheless, there we were, examining Year Two items as though they were new. We were going through the process for the sake of it. I got tired of the nugatory paperwork. I'm anti-paperwork, I always have been. If the mass of papers could be reduced to a level acceptable to private business the Greenies would be put out of work.

There was another technique which I found particularly offensive. It was not unusual for a member around the committee table to ask about issues explained in the agenda itself, the DP1, or whatever papers had been circulated before the meeting. When this was explained, the response would be, 'Oh, I haven't got time to read that'. It was an attitude I found arrogant and insulting.

Let me get on to helicopters. The Dibb review did not mention the transfer of helicopters to Army in the body of the paper. Nor was the matter ever discussed by Dibb with the Chiefs of Staff. Instead, the proposal appeared as an unsupported recommendation in Dibb's recommendations. It was apparent that something was in the wind.

Before the Dibb review had finished the CGS had made a bid for the transfer of helicopters. Subsequently the matter was studied by a committee chaired by the then Commodore MacDougall. The committee had six members, four sailors, one Army and one Air Force. With one dissension the report recommended the preservation of the status quo with some procedural recommendations; that is, that the RAAF should continue to operate the helicopters. I had no problems with the procedural recommendations at all; they were completely in harmony with my and my colleagues' views of providing adequate support to the other Services. What is more, I believed that the recommendations of the helicopter review committee were also in harmony with the then CDF's philosophy of the oneness of the Australian Defence Force, and that was what we were working towards.

Following the MacDougall Committee's report, the matter was discussed in COSC. This is what happened, and if I make an error, there are at least two people in this room who can put me straight. The COSC was
attended by the outgoing Secretary, Sir William Cole. That was unusual; perhaps it was because resource issues were involved. CGS's opening address ignored the MacDougall review completely, which had me scratching my head because my preparation was based on the MacDougall report. CNS followed and agreed with the report's recommendations, that is, that the RAAF should retain the helicopters. I weighed in by protesting about the way the meeting was being conducted. It was being run exactly as if a new project was introduced by a Chief of Operations at the Force Structure Committee, which of course was quite improper. I was overruled. Then the CDF dealt his card, saying that he'd been agonising over night over the matter, and he'd only just made his mind up. He thought the helicopters should be transferred to the Army, and handed around a prepared statement to that effect.

After lunch Sir William Cole failed to appear (because his retirement was imminent?) and there was some general discussion. We then went to a vote. Over the lunch break CNS had reversed his decision. He now supported the CGS and CDF, which meant that the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (Air Marshal Funnell) and I were out-voted.

I announced my intention of seeing the Minister. It was an interesting meeting. Minister Beazley was the most passive I'd ever seen him. Indeed, he resisted only one response, and that was to frown when at one stage I was hitting the table. So, I put my hand in my pocket and continued. I reminded the Minister of the recommendations of the MacDougall report, our track record in supporting the other Services with the helicopters, the fact that there was nothing in exercise reports to indicate dissatisfaction, and that on the contrary we had recently received laudatory comments following an exercise in 1986 in the Emerald area. That exercise had been a precursor to Kangaroo 86 which had also gone well. On this, Mr Beazley commented, 'But that's the only time', referring to the Emerald exercise, which made me prick my ears up and launch into a restatement of points made earlier. I concluded that I couldn't understand the decision, particularly in view of CDF's comments about the unity of the ADF and the way we were working.

Mr Beazley was a bit like Pontius Pilate, he seemed to wash his hands of the affair, yet later I recalled getting a message from London to say the Minister had announced on a visit not long before that the Army would get the helicopters. David Evans and I, at the launching of Paul Dibb's book on the Soviet Union at the ANU some months before, had also overheard Mr Beazley tell a group of people that he was going to give the helicopters to the Army. So much for his stance. This left me wondering
why we'd gone through this nugatory exercise with so much staff effort and so much anguish.

The 1987 White Paper included a statement on the transfer.

At this stage I should mention Ian Sinclair's political advice: 'Never complain, never explain and never apologise'. I'm not complaining, I'm here at a history conference to tell you what happened. I could see Army's argument for having the helicopters under their control, but I believe that given the unity of the ADF, our track record, and the proposed command and control arrangements - which we were quite happy to meet - the decision was wrong.

I was a bit put out afterwards and so were others. When CDF visited units after the decision he would rubbish the Helicopter review (the MacDougall Committee report) as 'that silly little report', which was rather embarrassing for Commodore MacDougall. It didn't endear the CDF to me and, it's something I won't forget. Furthermore, the acting Secretary sent a minute to CDF which also rubbished the MacDougall report. The minute was not addressed to the RAAF, and when I learnt of its existence and asked CDF for a copy I was told that it didn't exist, which I thought was unethical. I also thought it was rather stupid, given the habit these sorts of papers have, of wandering through photocopying machines.

Let's leave the helicopter transfer. It was a tremendous blow to a team of dedicated and highly skilled people in the Air Force, who were justifiably proud of their record.

Let me sum up. I pursued the development of an Air Force that would cause would-be aggressors to ponder over what we had. It's great to be in a position to give the other chap problems to solve and to have a capability that has to be taken into account. We resolved to provide the necessary support unstintingly for land and sea operations and I think in many ways we excelled. The reorganisations I mentioned were beneficial, while we also were looking at rationalising the Air Force Office and Support Command.

I'd like to conclude with an anecdote on female pilots. The Minister had asked me about the subject because he had Senator Susan Ryan and some others on his back about training women pilots. Although we'd included a respectable percentage of females, in the engineering branch for example, for symbolic reasons the Minister wanted female pilots. 'Can we do it?', he asked. I said, 'Sure we can, but we'd rather not at this stage'. He asked that we go ahead. We did so.
In the meantime I’d talked with General Charles Gabriel because the USAF had had female pilots for a long while and he said ‘Yes, they’re going well, we’ve got plenty of posts for them, we’re not a small air force’. General Gabriel said that in the early days of consideration, one senior general was violently against it. He had said, ‘If a person couldn’t pee over a six foot fence he or she had no right to fly an air force aeroplane’. Some time later this officer was a passenger on the flight deck of a Hercules which was flown by a lady who was a captain in the USAF, going into Hamilton Air Force Base, surrounded by hills and raining. She flew a very professional approach and taxied in in the rain. The general took a deep breath and reached his hand out and said, ‘Well, thank you young lady, I’ve got to hand it to you, that was a very professional job’. She said ‘Thanks General, and do you know I still can’t pee over a six foot fence’.

I’m glad you’re all awake. Thank you very much.

**DISCUSSION**

**Squadron Leader John Thynne:** In the message that announced the helicopter transfer it was stated that it was unreasonable and unrealistic to expect airmen to understand the land battle. I believe that counter arguments were available to be presented against that statement, but we at the coal-face never heard them. Were they in fact presented?

**Air Marshal Newham.** Yes they were. I think Air Marshal Funnell would remember the details of the CDF release that went out at the time. It was not one I would be proud of, it does not stand up to scrutiny. We had a number of Air Force officers who’d spent a lot of time with the Army, who knew the Army system and who could provide competent support. We had a tremendous number of people in the helicopter force who could work side by side with Army units. Indeed it was a joy - I suppose that’s the word - to see them operate. I went into the field with 9 Squadron when I was the Air Staff Officer at Amberley. As SASO at HQOC, as CAFOPS, DCAS and as CAS, I spent time in the field, these were not just fleeting visits. I was able to see the way the helo force operated and I was able to see the reactions of the battalion commanders and their staff who were being supported by the RAAF. Quite honestly, after Minister Beazley’s telling statement I accused the CGS of an orchestrated program to smear the Air Force as a lead-up to effecting transfer. It was denied, of course.
But to return to your question, no, the proposition was wrong. I got a little tired of the Air Force being criticised for not understanding maritime or army operations when we had a number of people who were very good at those jobs. Indeed, the reverse applied. It was difficult to get members of the other Services to understand air power and its application. Nor was the need given priority.

Furthermore, no sooner had the transfer process started than Army advertised for potential NCO pilots to serve short term engagements. So much for the argument that only pilots with a deep and thorough grounding in land operations could be effective. The proposition was patent deceit.
Air Marshal R.G. Funnell

Chief of the Air Staff

3 July 1987 to 1 October 1992

The title of my paper describes how I intend to address the convenor’s request that I give some of my views of the office of the Chief of the Air Staff, Royal Australian Air Force. First, I will describe the office as I see it and then I will give some of my experience of it.

The Office of the Chief of the Air Staff

My address to this conference is coloured by the fact that just two weeks ago I held the office. That is both fortunate and unfortunate. It is fortunate, for it assists recollection; it is also unfortunate because it is too close in time and space for true objectivity. Objectivity is a state of mind which comes only with separation. With that constraint as an acknowledged influence, I will outline some of my impressions.

Let me begin by giving some of my views of the office.

The title of the office is traditional rather than descriptive. The Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) is a commander, albeit in a somewhat limited sense, a fact and a facet of the job to which I will return later. The CAS is also a staff officer, but only on rare occasions. The CAS is the most senior officer of the RAAF. He is its professional head, its commander, its leader. He is the boss; he is not as he once was, in the days of the Air Board, primus inter pares.

In a very real sense he typifies and must epitomise all that the RAAF stands for. This requires much of the man. He must establish and maintain the standard. He is in many ways the public face of the Air Force. If he falters or is seen to be in any way deficient, those failings are seen to display a deficiency not just in the man but more particularly and significantly in the force he commands. That affects the image and standing of the RAAF.

The man who commands his Service must be deeply knowledgeable. He must know his Service. He must know its operations and have a keen appreciation of the operational spirit which infuses it for that goes to the very heart of the Service; it is its essence. He must know his profession,
its rationale, its tradition, its true ethic, for they constitute the professional foundation for all that he and his Service must do.

The Chief must possess true intellect. The job is demanding of his time and his energy, but it is especially demanding of his intellect. The issues with which he will grapple are broad and they are frequently complex. He must also possess character, that essential ingredient in a commander's make-up which will determine his ultimate standing with his troops and with his peers. To quote Napoleon: 'A military leader must possess as much character as intellect; the base must equal the height'.

The man who holds the office pro tem must appreciate keenly the dignity of the office. The more easy-going, less formal and, let's face it, the more rational approach to military discipline associated with air forces generally and the RAAF in particular is one of our strengths; but it must never be allowed to become too relaxed or to deteriorate into over-familiarity with its accompanying loss of dignity. This is not to say that the Chief should be distant and aloof - anything but. He must be friendly, approachable and very much part of the team. However, he cannot successfully lead that team if he is just 'one of the boys'. He can never cease being the Chief.

As I said earlier, the job is a demanding one. To perform it successfully the man in the office needs courage and strength of purpose. Modern air warfare has increased the gap between the CAS and his combat crews. In such circumstances, he needs to appreciate the unlimited nature of their commitment. He needs to inspire them with his own courage and commitment in times of adversity. In high places as well as at high altitudes, spirit is important (and let's not be coy about it, with air forces the spirit we are talking about is the spirit exemplified by the combat pilot). In fact, spirit is beyond important, it is essential and so is determination.

Determination must, however, be tempered with judgment. At high altitudes, a bug-out is sometimes necessary and in high places an honourable compromise is similarly so. In high places and at high altitudes determination and judgment go together but both must be based on a solid foundation of courage and spirit.

The job is also one which requires decisions at a rapid rate, often without affording the decision-maker the luxury of time for deep consideration and reflection. Moreover, these decisions may be far-reaching, both for the organisation and those who comprise it. In such circumstances, to possess a core of well-reasoned principles and beliefs is of enormous benefit. I am not talking about biases, and I am not talking about rigidity.
and dogmatism; I am talking about intellectually and ethically robust positions which are part of the Chief's moral fabric and with which he is both familiar and comfortable. When the going gets tough and you are on your own (and it is amazing how often this occurs) they are the rocks which stabilise you.

One of the first and most lasting impressions I gained in my time as CAS was the status afforded the office and the respect offered to its holder. CAS is a statutory position. It is a position with a strong history and tradition, some aspects of which previous speakers at this conference have addressed. The support given the incumbent is quite astonishing. I admit that I was not fully prepared for it. If something was required for 'the Chief', it happened. This is humbling. It also requires much of you as the holder of the office. How could you possibly let down people who are willing to give you so much, so unreservedly? It also requires of you the highest of ethical stances. In a very positive and real way the CAS sets the ethical standard. Staff have told me that they have been able to settle issues by quoting the example of CAS (if the Chief does it this way, why don't you?). Of course, if CAS bends the rules, how can he or anyone else chastise others for doing likewise? This applies to all senior RAAF officers; but CAS sets the standard. Neither he nor any other senior officer can place personal inclinations and preferences ahead of acceptance of Service requirements no matter how personally inconvenient that may be.

The CAS must guard against becoming isolated. In serving him, staff - both his senior staff and his personal staff - must protect him. This is necessary and appropriate. However, the CAS must guard against being isolated from the RAAF, its people and their concerns. How can this be done? A variety of means are available to him. Discussions are useful. Visits, properly constructed and conducted of course, are very helpful. I found that talks, discussions, and question and answer sessions with officers, warrant officers, senior NCOs, airmen and airwomen were invaluable sources of information and attitudes.

Gauging attitudes and gaining impressions of that elusive concept, morale, is never easy and errors are frequently made. This is a point which I have tried to get across to politicians, bureaucrats and journalists, many of whom seem to regard themselves as expert observers of attitudes and morale. I use the analogy of the 'uncertainty principle' developed by the German scientist, Werner Heisenberg. That principle when applied to measuring the behaviour of sub-atomic particles asserts that accurate measurements cannot be made as the very act of measuring alters the characteristics. In similar fashion, the visit of influential people to a base or unit so distorts the normal operations of that base that true readings of attitudes and morale are almost impossible to obtain. One of my aims as
CAS was to make my visits to bases and units so frequent and of such a style that they would not be regarded as extraordinary. There are limits to this but I hope you can see and appreciate the direction in which I tried to head.

The topic of base visits raises an associated point. Our people are bright, they are intelligent, they are articulate. A visit by an influential person provides an opportunity to pursue an issue about which they feel deeply but whose pursuit may have been frustrated through normal processes. Also, visits by influential people offer those visited the opportunity to push grievances directly to high places. Consequently, what is discussed and raised with visitors tends towards the negative. However, to generalise that negativism into poor morale as some are wont to do is to show a lack of knowledge of military life and human behaviour.

Trusted friends can be a source of rich feedback. I am reminded here of Martin van Creveld’s reference to the ‘directed telescope’ in his excellent work, ‘On Command’. The ‘directed telescope’ allows its user to focus precisely at long distance on some aspect of which he would otherwise be unaware. To have colleagues who are able to function in such a role is a major benefit for any senior commander. I also found that it need not just be people at senior ranks who can function as a ‘directed telescope’. I gained considerable insight into the attitudes and feelings of our airmen and airwomen through having junior people on my staff who felt comfortable about raising issues of significance with me. I will give an example because it shows that, try as you might to gain a sound view of your command, sometimes you overlook the obvious. I mentioned that I visited bases and units frequently to gain first-hand knowledge and feedback on current operations and on attitudes. A young corporal in my office pointed out to me last year that, while I was seen frequently at bases and units, I was personally almost unknown to the people in RAAF Support Unit Canberra, and they were people who every single day of the year were providing me with services which were both wide-ranging and essential. Obvious? Yes, but all too frequently we overlook these things.

An associated point is that the Chief must guard against allowing the status, the perquisites and the trappings of the office to alter his personal style and to affect his relations with his peers and subordinates. The temptation is certainly there. The office and its surroundings - physical, social, psychological - combine to produce an environment which can suggest a personal status well beyond the ordinary. However, in almost every case such a suggestion would be false. It is the office rather than the man which is beyond the ordinary.
That then was the office as I saw it and what I believed it required of me. Above all else, however, what is required of the Chief is that he have a clear vision of the RAAF and where it is headed, the communicative skills to share that vision, and the leadership and inter-personal skills to translate that vision into reality.

My Experience of the Office

I came to the office with considerable knowledge of it. For example, I had met every previous CAS save Burnett. I had seen many of them in operation and had conversed with a number of them. Also, I had been a member of the CAS's Advisory Committee (CASAC). I had been the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF) and, thereby, a member of both the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) and the Defence Force Development Committee (DFDC).

After the announcement of my appointment, I discussed the office with and sought advice from a number of previous CASs. From all of this plus my studies over the years into both the military profession and Australian military history, I had formed ideas of the job, its requirements and how I wished to operate from the position. Immediately before taking up the position and with the concurrence of the then CAS, Air Marshal Jake Newham, I communicated those ideas by personal letter to each of the AOCs and Division Heads. Because so much of my thinking about the office and the way I tried to operate from it is captured in that letter, I will quote extensively from it:

My views and those of Air Marshal Newham on the RAAF and the broad path ahead of it are fundamentally the same. Consequently, there should be a sense of continuity rather than of a change in direction as the leadership changes hands. We are also agreed that the policy prescriptions of the Defence Policy Information Paper are a sound base for the further development of the RAAF. This is not to say that, as the new team at the head of the RAAF, we have nothing new to offer and will be content to merely sit on our hands. Anything but. Creativity and innovation are to be encouraged, but we should not be discarding the accumulated wisdom of the past just to be innovatory. A judicious and careful balance between continuity and creativity will be our aim.

As I see it, the RAAF must be viewed primarily as the air power element of a cohesive, integrated defence force. It therefore behoves us to ensure that our plans and our development are consonant with that of the ADF and that our integration with the other two Services is complete.
Our particular expertise is the application of air power in the
defence of and for the security of Australia and its interests.
Consequently, the study and knowledge of air power must be the
central element of the RAAF's corporate intellect. We must know
how to develop and apply air power in all its forms; we must know
how to recruit, train, educate, organise and lead people so that the
RAAF will be an effective fighting force.

Let me be more specific. Let me describe my vision of our future.

As the RAAF exists to provide the combat air power that this
nation needs for its security, our primary emphasis must be on our
combat forces, the strike-reconnaissance force, the tactical fighter
force and the long-range maritime patrol force. The operational
effectiveness of those forces must be the goal that every member of
the RAAF sees boldly in front of him or her.

Our emphasis on combat forces in no way diminishes the
importance of our airborne and ground-based support forces, but
it does allocate primacy of purpose where it belongs. That having
been said, we must acknowledge that much of the RAAF's
reputation in peacetime depends more on its support forces than
its combat forces. The way in which we provide, every single day of
the year, transport support, air-sea rescue services, other
assistance to the civil community and to other arms of the ADF,
and aid to the civil power colours the way in which others view us
and respond to our requests. Every element of the RAAF is
important and every element must perform effectively and
relevantly.

Many parts of our Air Force, many of our actions and functions,
are connected only indirectly to our combat forces and are
associated only indirectly with how they perform; but, unless we
can make the connections and reason convincingly that expending
resources in those indirect ways ultimately enhances our combat
performance, we must cut those actions and functions from our
repertoire. It is our combat forces which constitute our reason for
being and it is our job to ensure that they can do what the
Australian people require of their Air Force.

That may seem a little long-winded but it lets you know how I was
thinking as I took up the office of CAS. Looking back on it now, I
doubt if I would change a single word if I were writing it today. To
show that some things change little while others are changing a lot, I will quote some later passages from that same letter:

There can be little doubt that the Services are in for some tough and financially stringent times, but we in the Air Force should be determined not to just wring our hands in frustration or make frequent trips to the wailing wall. Instead we are going to get our thinking well in front of our equipment so that, when the money becomes available - and it will - we are ready to use it effectively. We need to think about what we are going to be doing operationally; we need to devise clever ways to test and refine our doctrine; and we need to determine how we are going to support the operational force with operationally ready equipment and people to make certain that we have the RAAF that this nation needs. What we as a senior team must do is determine how to use and support our operational kit in better, smarter and more efficient ways. In the years that I will be commander of the RAAF, I want, with your support, to make certain that that is exactly what we do.

I concluded my letter by saying the following:

The Air Force which I will command as from 3 July 1987 is a fine Service. I am honoured by my appointment. I honestly believe that with your support we can develop an even better and more effective force, one which the nation can trust with its security and one of which we can feel justly proud to be its senior officers. I am dedicating whatever talents and abilities I have to achieve those goals during my term of office and I ask you to join me in this wholly worthwhile endeavour.

Each Monday morning for my term as CAS, I held a meeting of Division Heads. At the first of those meetings, held on 6 July 1987, I took the opportunity to set out my personal goals. On that topic I had this to say:

My short-term goals are, firstly, to identify those issues which are of genuine importance for the effectiveness and general well-being of the RAAF and, secondly, to establish the type of operating and decision-making environment in which settling those issues is facilitated. My medium-term goal is to move functions and people out of Canberra to the Command Headquarters and Bases, especially the latter. My long term goal - and it is one which pervades the short, medium and long terms - is to ensure that the place of air power and the roles which the RAAF must play in the
securing of Australia are properly understood within both the RAAF and the wider community.

In my first two weeks in office, I met separately with the Minister (Kim Beazley), the CDF (General Peter Gratton), the Secretary (Alan Woods) and the two AOCs. In these meetings I informed those people of my goals and the modus operandi I would use in office.

Two weeks after taking office I held a seminar at Coffs Harbour with the air marshals of the RAAF. This was a seminar without staff and without note-takers. My aim was to create an atmosphere in which free and full expression would be given to all ideas about the future of the RAAF. In my opening remarks to those free-flowing discussions I had this to say:

If the RAAF is to operate effectively, it needs to have its senior officers working well together with an agreed set of goals and an agreed agenda.

I am determined to build a corporate approach to the leadership and command of the RAAF. Let's not be confused. I am not talking of consensus management, compromise solutions and other lowest-common-denominator forms of pseudo-leadership. If a decision has to be made and made quickly, either I will make it or one of you will make it on my behalf. But in making that decision, the decision-maker will have a sound knowledge of our corporate philosophy and the corporate plan with which we are working for he would have been actively and intimately involved in their making.

That is what we should all leave here with: a very good knowledge of where we are going and how we are going to get there - and we all must be a part of a single-minded team. If you feel that you cannot be or do not want to be a member of the team, come to see me and we'll make other arrangements. We must be together - the Royal Australian Air Force deserves nothing less.

(In the light of later events, I wish some members of that group had taken me up on my offer.)

I found that meeting at Coffs Harbour to be most useful and I continued with those seminars each year through my term in office. In later years, I supplemented them with a more extensive conference here in Canberra for the senior officers of the RAAF. The aim of those conferences was again to develop a widely-known and accepted view of the RAAF and its direction for the future.
I trust that I have now given you an impression of how I viewed the office as I entered it and an impression of the general direction I wished to take, where I was headed and how I aimed to get there. I will now give you some of the impressions I gained as I travelled the path I had established for myself.

For a Chief the relationships he establishes with a variety of people are very important for him. For example, he needs a good relationship with a number of politicians. The nature of the relationship depends on the issue and the politician. Moreover it differs according to the role of the politician. For example, is he or she a Minister, a member of the Government, a member of the Opposition, a member of a Parliamentary Committee? All are important but in different ways and for different reasons.

In the modern era, there is much less contact between politicians and senior military men than there was, say, 30 years ago. If you read Dickie Williams' autobiography or Harry Rayner's biography of Fred Scherger, you will notice that they had frequent contact with Ministers. A number of explanations offer themselves. When the Department of Defence was located in Melbourne, Ministers spent a large proportion of their working time collocated with their military and Public Service staffs. Now we are separated by Lake Burley Griffin and Ministers, or for that matter any politicians, are seldom seen in the Department. I would say that Malcolm Fraser was the last Minister for Defence who spent time in the Department, and he was Minister for a comparatively short time a long time ago.

Thirty years ago each of the Services had its own Minister and much of the contact to which I refer was between the Service Chief and his Service's Minister. Also, I consider that the lesser contact now experienced is the outcome of changes in the processes of government. Today, Ministers rely more heavily on the advice of personal staff and less on the advice of military officers and public servants than was the case 30 years ago.

I was criticised both within Defence and by Ministers for not spending enough time with politicians. In fact, it was put to me that I was all but unknown to Members of Parliament. I tried to overcome that but it was not easy because my natural inclination was to seek contact only when it was necessary. To seek more contact with politicians merely for the sake of becoming better known always seemed to me to have the touch of contrivance to it. The counter point of view and one to which I perhaps might have given more weight is that it is important for Members of
Parliament to know and to trust the nation's Service Chiefs, and it is the Service Chiefs who should take the initiative in bringing about that state.

Relations with politicians are seldom easy. The orientations of politicians and military men differ markedly. I must admit that to this day I am uneasy with most politicians. That having been said, my relations with all the Ministers in the Defence portfolio in my time as CAS were generally good. Sure, those relations had their moments but the bad moments were few and greatly outnumbered by the good ones.

A widely held but totally false belief is that relations were not good between Minister Ray and me. That is not only untrue, it is also wide of the mark. I have considerable respect for Robert Ray as a politician and a Minister. Yes, we did have our differences and we each spoke frankly about those, and to this day I believe that he was wrong in some of his actions and beliefs. However, to characterise that as poor relations is to misunderstand totally the nature of relations between Ministers and their senior advisers.

Another set of relationships which were characterised by uneasiness were those with journalists. There are few whom I know who cover the Canberra scene whom I would trust. Moreover, they are a lazy bunch who rely mainly on leaks for stories. Few of them have the inclination or the intellect to research a topic thoroughly. Consequently, their stories are generally wrong and their opinions poorly based. In short, they don't have a whole lot going for them. Of the media, radio is probably the best and fairest. Also, once you get away from the big cities, you find that representatives of the provincial media are more genuine and more interested in obtaining your point of view than in wishing to push, as their big-city cousins do, their own point of view.

Within Defence, the relationships which a Chief establishes with the other major players are crucial. If you are not diligent and careful in this area, your task can become very difficult. You must be and must be regarded as being reliable and trustworthy. If you are not, you and your Service are in trouble. Also of great importance here is your performance in the senior committees. You must be the advocate of your Service's position and you must be purposeful in putting that position on the table and persuading others to your point of view. However, you must also display the capacity for seeing the other man's point of view and a willingness to accept a less-than-ideal outcome for your Service if that is the way the argument goes. Important too in committee is self control. On occasions the provocation can be extreme but if you cannot control your behaviour you will lose not only the argument but also your credibility. With that gone so too is your influence on major issues.
I felt that, in general, I established good working relationships within the Defence portfolio. Certainly it varied between offices and with office-holders and, with a very few, the relationship was never wholly comfortable. However, no relationship ever became unworkable or even close to being so.

Of most importance within Defence is a Chief's relationships with his fellow Chiefs. Unfortunately, in recent times, as the role and status of the single Service Chiefs have been increasingly threatened, the truly important relationship has become the relationship with the other single Service Chiefs. I say unfortunately advisedly for I feel that it is both unfortunate and unnecessary for the single Service Chiefs to feel threatened. I believe very strongly that the essential precondition for a strong and robust Australian Defence Force is that it be composed of three well-led single Services whose primary orientation is to sea, land and air warfare respectively. The notion of a single Australian Defence Force, the current catch-cry for which is integration, is the product of the minds of people who have spent a long time in Defence without ever really understanding or appreciating its true and fundamental elements (and that includes people who wear military uniforms).

The influence of the single Service Chiefs is best exemplified by the power they possess when they act in a concerted fashion. On a few issues in my term - and it was only a few - the three single Service Chiefs were opposed on a major issue by almost every other senior officer or official. In every one of those cases the combined influence of the Chiefs was sufficient to win the day. I should add, however, that their influence dissipates very quickly if any chink appears in the armour of unity.

The relationships which a CAS establishes with his international equivalents are very important. Of these the most important are those which he establishes with Chiefs of the air forces of alliance partners. Here I would place those with the Chiefs of the USAF, the RAF and the RNZAF on the highest rung but followed very closely by those with the Chiefs of regional air forces such as those of our other FPDA partners and with the other nations of Asean. I am delighted to be able to say that I believe that our relationships within the region are universally good. They are, I believe, the best that they have been in my period of service and we must work hard to ensure that that happy state of affairs continues.

In this final part of my presentation I will discuss some of the issues which arose in my term of office. As I suppose all CASs have done at the end of their tour as CAS, I have been looking back at the last five years and three months. To look at the RAAF of 3 July 1987 and the RAAF of 1
October 1992 is to look at two quite different organisations. The changes which have been made and the ones which are underway have been and are wide-ranging and deep. Also the issues which confronted me when I became CAS were so very different from those which were confronting me at the end.

In July 1987 our major activities were centred on implementing the White Paper of March 1987. Another issue - and a very difficult one for the commander of a Service - was to hand over to the Army the utility helicopters of the ADF. Speaking of helicopters, of which the air force now operates none, raises the issue of 12 Squadron and its removal from the RAAF's order of battle along with its CH-47 Chinook aircraft. Although it came later in time, it is appropriate to raise the issue here and to correct some misconceptions.

Conventional wisdom to the contrary, it was not the RAAF which decided to remove the Chinooks from its order of battle. That decision was taken by the Government on the unanimous advice of the (then) senior committee in the Department of Defence, the DFDC. By way of background: in the second quarter of 1989 as the result of the perennial problem of budget financing not matching previously allocated financial guidance, the Services were asked to specify the capability adjustments they might have to make. The RAAF specified, among other actions, that one such possibility was the removal of the Chinooks from the order of battle. The disadvantages, especially to the Army, of doing so were detailed, disadvantages which were soon to be illuminated in Exercise Kangaroo 89. However, the decision went against the Air Force and was announced. The reluctance, indeed the total unwillingness, of some of those involved to subsequently correct the misconceptions bruited abroad on who was responsible for that decision angers me to this day.

Many of the major actions taken early in my term related to the development of the RAAF's infrastructure. The decisions and most of the planning associated with these had been conducted before I took office. It was my pleasant duty to bring on line such major developments as RAAF Base Curtin and RAAF Base Tindal and to develop the planning of RAAF Base Scherger. These are invaluable developments for the defence of this nation. It is worth reflecting on the fact that there is no way in which the ADF could have held K89 or K92 without Curtin and Tindal. This emphasises the essentiality of sound infrastructure in conducting effective operations especially in the difficult terrain and sparsely populated areas of northern Australia. It also shows that, in the context of defence financing, it does not take enormous sums of money to develop significant improvements in capability. I took the opportunity of pointing out to our
then Prime Minister at the opening of Tindal that for the price of one frigate he could have three Tindals.

At the same time as we were developing infrastructure in the north our infrastructure in the south was under threat. This was an outcome of the so-called Cooksey report. That report was one of the first of the great impressionistic reviews. (An impressionistic review is one in which an outsider has a quick look at some issue in Defence, gives his impressions and has them accepted as holy writ. The Chiefs of Staff are then seen as reactionary and obstructionist if they are not fully convinced. The practice continues to this day.) The infrastructure targets were Point Cook, Laverton and our capital city Support Units.

The precept which underpinned the Cooksey report was basically sound. Our bases and other operating locations in the south were never likely to be used directly in combat. Consequently, for both efficiency and economy, the number of operating locations should be minimised. The RAAF accepts this and, in fact, at a later time and at my direction the then Air Commodore Frank Cox conducted a more tightly focused review of our infrastructure based on the same precept. However, what needed to be recognised was that in rearranging infrastructure we were not starting with a clean sheet. If the costs of relocation exceeded the gains to be obtained from the infrastructural changes, one would have to examine very closely the reasons for changing before taking such a decision. Another way, and one which has been used frequently in recent times to achieve a desired outcome, is to exaggerate the financial benefits of the change through over-estimating the realisable value of defence property.

A special irony attaches to the demise of the RAAF’s capital city Support Units. We were told in 1987 that, in the interests of efficiency and economy, the functions of these units were to be transferred to other RAAF operating locations in the region. Five years later, as a result of the Defence Regional Support Review (DRSR), those functions are being transferred back into the central business districts of our state capitals for reasons of - you guessed it - efficiency and economy.

Another set of major issues which confronted me at the beginning of my term were associated with personnel. Many of these were the outcome of the Hamilton report which had been commissioned by Minister Beazley and which I had first worked with when I was VCDF. The Hamilton report was a report into the way spouses were affected by their husband’s or wife’s military service. That report led to a number of far-reaching actions especially in the area of housing. The newly appointed Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, Ros Kelly, took a very close interest in
these matters and pushed very hard to rectify deficiencies in our treatment of spouses that had been allowed to continue for far too long.

The establishment of the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) led to a major breakthrough in the provision of appropriate housing for our people. Housing is another one of those areas in which it is indeed salutary to consider what it was like in July 1987 as compared to October 1992.

The other major personnel issue in those early days was that of retention, especially of pilots. How things change! Five years later we are grappling with the considerable problems of reducing the size of the RAAF in a period when our wastage rate is the lowest in decades. As for pilot retention, we have had to cut back on our pilot training rate because we are losing so few pilots that we have a surplus of numbers (but not of experience) in most of our squadrons. We all know, however, that this present state is just another section of the cycle and, of course, it too is only transitory.

The most constant of the issues I encountered in my term as CAS were those which can collectively be described as organisational. In July 1987 a number of organisational initiatives associated with the March 1987 Defence Policy Information Paper were underway. In the RAAF, we had a trial organisation of Operational Command in place. That, however, was just the beginning. After that the reviews and reorganisations came racing down upon the Services at a pace which the rapidly reducing single Service staffs found difficult to match. DLRP, Baker, Sanderson, DRSR, and then the big one, the Force Structure Review. These had the single Services under constant pressure to consider, to comprehend, to analyse, and form judgments. At the same time, the Services were still required to operate in an environment in which more was being asked and expected but without matching finances.

Don't get me wrong. Many of the changes were beneficial. Moreover - and it is more than just a rhetorical point - improvements are impossible without change. However, no matter how beneficial the change, if the total pace of change exceeds the absorptive capacity of the target population, the end result may well be detrimental to organisational health. At times over the last five years, I have felt that the ADF was in that situation. I believe I am correct in saying that my view was shared by all the other single Service Chiefs with whom I served.

The organisational issue which most affected the Service Chiefs was the establishment of the Joint Commands. At the time of their establishment and to this day, I have no great difficulty with the concept. At its heart is the notion that, in the event of operations, the command line goes directly
from the commander at the strategic level (CDF) to the commander(s) at the operational level. The Service Chiefs are taken out of the direct chain of command but still have vital and fundamental roles to play. First, they must ensure that the operational commander(s) receives both operationally ready personnel and operationally ready equipment to conduct his (their) tasks. Secondly, each of the single Service Chiefs fulfils the vital role of professional adviser in his particular environment to CDF, the Secretary and the Government. This is when the single Service Chiefs really do function as Chiefs of Staff, and it is a most important function.

This system of operational command has placed more focus on and given more emphasis to the operational level of war. In particular for the RAAF, it has emphasised the functions and importance of Air HQ, something which had always been lacking in its predecessor, Headquarters Operational Command. We also know from a number of field exercises and CPXs that the Air Command battle staff is a very powerful planning and operational tool. My reservation with the joint commands is that I doubt if they will ever be used in the way envisaged because they have little application in their present form to any scenario other than possibly the least likely, the direct defence of Australia. I will return to that shortly.

However, my problem with the Joint Commands is not with the concept but with the way in which it has been applied, especially by the staff of HQADF. That staff seek to cut the Service Chief and his staff out of not only the operation but also everything leading to it. And yet when anything goes wrong it is the Service Chief and not the staff of HQADF who have to face up to the consequences and explain the circumstances. This difficulty which I and the other single Service Chiefs had with HQADF changed with changes in personnel in the HQ. However, the proper functioning of a command system should not depend on personalities but be inherent to the system.

Another major organisational initiative of this period was the formation of Northern Command (NORCOM). I was opposed from the beginning to the establishment of NORCOM. I felt that trying to mix a geographically based command within a total command system which was functionally based would create major difficulties. It would be worthwhile trying to overcome these if a Northern Command in being was essential for Australia but I could not convince myself that it was. As I saw it, and still do, its basis is primarily political and presentational. That having been said, my views on NORCOM have changed in recent years. To explain why I need to give some of my views on our declaratory policy, the defence of Australia.
The defence of Australia is the centrepiece of the 1987 White Paper. Moreover and very importantly, the coupled notions of defence of Australia and self-reliance struck a receptive chord with the people of Australia. The esoterics of Defence policy are beyond the range of active concern for the great majority of the Australian people, but the concept that the first duty of any Government is the security of its citizens is known and supported by almost all. Consequently, a Government policy which emphasised that tenet was always going to be a winner. My difficulty with our policy is not with the policy itself but with the so-called credible contingencies on which it is said to be based.

Anyone who believes that the most credible defence contingencies which this country faces involve small groups of armed invaders tracking across northern Australia for vague purposes usually described as 'political' has a well-developed sense of the bizarre. I believe, and I have been saying this for many years, that the next time Australian arms are used in conflict will not be for the defence of Australia but as part of some multi-national force in fulfilling one of our many obligations to collective security. That is why we have been involved in everything from the Maori uprisings to the Gulf War and that type of involvement is still far more likely by many orders of magnitude than being involved in the so-called credible contingencies.

However, I am generally relaxed about our declaratory policy. It gives us a well-balanced force structure which can fulfil both the requirements of credible contingencies and those of supplying effective elements within a larger multi-national force. For that type of involvement, I believe that a headquarters like that of HQNORCOM might well be needed. Consequently, my view is that HQNORCOM should be a joint headquarters in being which can be deployed as required in Australia or elsewhere to support the Commander of an Australian joint force. Having it in-being allows us to develop expertise in and procedures for the operation of a small, deployable joint force headquarters. It also functions as a model for other such headquarters.

They are just some of the important issues which have consumed my time, intellect and energies over the last five years. There were many others. I have not even mentioned the many far-reaching changes we implemented within the RAAF. In particular I have not mentioned the change from which I have gained the most personal satisfaction, namely, the placing of the RAAF on a sound intellectual, conceptual and doctrinal base. That will have to wait for another time and another place.

In like fashion, I have not mentioned a subject to which I devoted considerable personal attention, the emphasis on operational orientation
in all of our activities and on the ultimate gauge of any Service, its operational effectiveness. That too will have to wait.

My summary thoughts on the office of the CAS are neither lengthy nor especially profound, but they are deeply-felt. To be given command of your Service is a great honour but, even more, it places enormous responsibility on the holder of the office. You are placed in a position of great trust by your fellow citizens. Much is expected of you by those citizens and that is rightly so. Also, much is expected of you by the men and women you command. They look to you for leadership, for vision, for guidance, for help. You are their champion and you are expected to possess and display a champion's qualities.

To have been chosen to be the commander of this nation's air force was an honour beyond comparison. It filled me with a spirit and a sense of mission I find difficult to explain. To have spent over five years in command of such a fine force was a further honour and one which is deeply felt by me. The support, the warm and very human encouragement which I received from the level of AC to that of air marshal, was both gratifying and personally humbling. My service as CAS of the RAAF was the most enriching and personally rewarding experience of my life. I trust that it was of benefit to the men and women I commanded and the nation I served.

**DISCUSSION**

**Air Vice-Marshall R.W. Bradford**: Sir, we heard various speakers talk earlier today about civil/military relationships. I'd like to express an opinion that's based on both direct involvement and observation. I think that life at the senior level in the military has improved considerably in terms of our relationships with the civilians in the Department of Defence over the last few years. To my mind we get on very well with them and I would agree with the comments that were made earlier that a lot of the difficulties we had were those of personality rather than organisational arrangements. These days, Sir Arthur Tange and some well known DepSecs don't get a mention. They were individuals who created a great deal of trouble. They've now left the scene and I think things are working far more smoothly.

However, and I now express an opinion, I do get concerned when I hear from time to time young Navy officers, who probably were in short pants 10 years ago, talking about how the Air Force did away with Navy's aircraft carrier, and similar comments made by senior and junior Army
officers about the Chinooks. As has been explained today, both of those stories are wrong. You've mentioned what happened with the Chinooks and I can say for a fact that's quite true because I was there when that decision was made. CDF, CGS and DCGS all agreed we should get rid of the Chinooks. Yet I still hear very senior people saying that Air Force did away with the Chinooks. So, my worry is that whilst we might be getting on better with the civilians, we still have a lot of work to do between the three Services so that the junior officers - Army, Navy and Air Force - all understand what is going on at the higher levels. Ray Conroy referred to the 'bunker' mentality we might suffer from within Air Force and that's part of it I think. We're forever on the defensive trying to explain things to people. Are we heading in the right direction with this?

Air Marshal Funnell: The relationship between public servants and military officers has varied markedly over my 25 years in and around the Canberra scene. Back in the days of the single Service offices there was a very strong rapport between public servants and military officers within the single Service offices, mainly because the public servants within each office identified very much with their Service. Most of them had spent a full career in that particular office. That changed dramatically at the time of the Tange reorganisation of the Defence group of departments, and for a long time it was not good. I shouldn't mince words here, it was poor and it harmed the whole of the functioning of the Defence portfolio. In recent times it's been a hell of a lot better. I think the transformation really picked up at the time that Alan Woods became Secretary of the Department. That's not to say anything against Bill Cole. Bill Cole was quite a different fellow from his predecessor, Bill Pritchett. Bill Cole was, there's no doubt about it, a very fine public administrator.

Following the Tange reorganisation, the areas of most concern to the single Services in their dealings with Defence Central came mainly under the purview of DepSec B. Bill Cole left most of that to the Deputy Secretary of the day, so we didn't see very much change from the previous Tange and Pritchett eras in that area.

That changed for the better with Alan Woods and really has picked up enormously during Tony Ayers' time as Secretary of the Department. I think, too, some of the changes which have occurred with the committee system have helped. Today, probably the most powerful committee in the Defence Department is the Chiefs of Staff Committee. You go back 10 years and that wasn't the case.

The other thing we have to look at in the Australian Defence Force and, most particularly in the RAAF - because it will affect us more than the other two Services in the period ahead - is the relationship between
civilians and uniformed people across the breadth of the RAAF and the ADF, not just in Russell Offices. We are changing that mix over the next several years and we have to ensure that the outcome is a positive one for the RAAF, for the ADF and for the nation. We have to guard against this feeling that if it's civilian it's bad and if it's military it's good. Some of the people who worked closest to me when I was CAS and who gave me tremendous support were civilians. Their vision, their orientation, was towards the Royal Australian Air Force and its mission. I could not have asked more of those people had they been wearing uniform.

What we have to do as we change the civilian/military ratio is to ensure that our civilians sign up for the mission of the RAAF and work within the integrated civilian/military force that is going to be the RAAF of the future. I've found that many of the civilians at senior levels with whom I've worked over many years appreciate that point of view and are giving their support to make it happen.

Wing Commander E. Ilton: Sir, two of the best areas for creating better understanding and civilian participation in military activities are staff college courses and, in the past, the Industrial Mobilisation Course (IMC).

Air Marshal Funnell: Thanks Ted. Yes, that's true. I don't know the future of the IMC but if I was a betting man, and I am, I'd take odds that it's not going to resurface. In some ways that's a pity. I agree with you, staff courses are important and we do have civilian participation on our staff courses and JSSC. One of the unfortunate aspects though - and this has come up in the Chiefs of Staff Committee in our discussions on JSSC - is that military staff training was not highly regarded among civilians both within Defence and in other portfolios, and consequently the people they sent there tended to be second-raters who never went anywhere. The current Secretary is determined to change that.

Mr J. Trinder: In a single lifetime we've seen the development from where we had no heavier-than-air machines to where, I would suggest, air power is one of the most, if not the most, important aspects of waging war. You look at where technology has taken us, particularly over the last 10 years, to RPV technology and the success of precision guided missiles in the Gulf War. I wonder if you'd care to prognosticate on 50 years time when technology has gone even further, and when we might fly C130s or their replacement without any aircrew. Will there still be a future for the Air Force, and will all the button pushers be wearing khaki or dark blue uniforms or all purple uniforms?
Air Marshal Funnell: When I start looking into crystal balls, Tom, they invariably cloud over immediately. I don’t think it’s a very productive intellectual activity to try to second guess the future. As a wise man once said, 'Prophecy is difficult, especially about the future'. When I look back to some of the studies of futurologists, you don’t have to go back too many years, in most cases only five years, to read prognostications and find out how terribly wrong they’ve been. With air forces, even despite some recent dramatic examples of the successful use of air power in combat, we have to be very cautious because the world of the future is likely to be very different from the world in which air power was thus applied.

When I was recently in the United States, I was discussing this with my good friend, Tony McPeak, Chief of Staff of the US Air Force. One of the major studies he has underway at the moment is how air power can be applied in circumstances similar to those which currently apply in the former state of Yugoslavia. He said about six months previously the President and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had come to him and asked him the question, 'How can we use combat air power in the Yugoslav situation?', and General McPeak said 'We can’t'. Yet, that may well be one of the most frequent requirements in the years ahead. We have to put our thinking caps on and tussle with that. I find it very difficult to determine how we might need to apply air power 25 years from now. You can generally work it out within the next five to 10 years, given your current concepts and your current equipment. Going beyond that I’ll just give it a miss, Tom.

Air Vice-Marshall T.W. O’Brien: In this current climate of economic rationalism, or one of those other catch phrases that float around the place at the moment, I’ve identified a concern and, that is, that within the Defence Department, both uniformed and otherwise, there is a growing mood, if you like, for the single Services to be identified as financial programs, not as single Services. That is, that Air Force ceases to be Air Force and becomes Program Four. We see this, and a simple example was when people rang up and said we want to take Air Force Office out of the Functional Directory, the telephone directory, and put Program Four as a header. I believe that this is a matter for some concern. It’s not only occurring inside the Defence Department, it’s also occurring out in the other Departments. If you’d like to comment on that thanks Sir.

Air Marshal Funnell: We’ve discussed this before, Tom, and you’re totally correct. I’ve opposed it but it comes up time and time again in senior forums that in this period of program management and budgeting, which has brought some excellent outcomes in its wake, there has
developed, particularly amongst financially oriented public servants within Defence and elsewhere, this penchant for referring to the single Services as financial programs. It's dumb, it's stupid, it indicates attitudes which are also dumb and stupid.

**Mr R. LeMercier:** There are four Chiefs of the Air Staff present. I would like to hear something about the background to their selection as Chief, and the selection of their successors. Do the public servants and politicians have an input into the process?

**Air Marshal Funnell:** The first thing is that when it comes to be selected as Chief of the Air Staff, bad friends and enemies are not helpful. One thing in the Canberra environment that is dispiriting on occasions, is that one can acquire a reputation which is totally undeserved but which then becomes currency amongst so many people who have real influence in these matters. It can, in particular, become currency for Ministers' minders, their personal staff. I've found it terribly demoralising on occasions to have people who were employed on the political staff of Ministers offering opinions about senior military men and senior public servants whom they would know directly only in the most fleeting of fashions, but offering opinions on them, including to Ministers, that were just very, very poorly based. Yet it's difficult to counteract. In particular, it's difficult to counteract if you don't even know of it. I know that that has been influential in a number of senior appointments.

As to the way the selection process goes, I'm only familiar with a minor part of that. On two separate occasions in my time as CAS I was requested by the CDF to make a recommendation to him as to my successor. I was not given any reason for this other than the CDF wanted it. In neither case was my initial appointment or my extended term as CAS coming close to finishing. I was merely asked to make the recommendation and, naturally, I'm a good soldier, I did as I was told. On both occasions I canvassed all the candidates, gave my views and made a recommendation. What happened to it after that I know not. All I can say is that - and this is specified in the various directives - both the Secretary and the CDF have responsibilities when it comes to senior appointments and ultimately, of course, the appointment is decided by Cabinet. I would suggest that if the CDF, Secretary and Minister were all lined up behind one particular candidate, he'd have a pretty reasonable run in Cabinet.

**Dr Alan Stephens:** What kind of career development background should a Chief bring to the job, and has the RAAF, in general, prepared its Chiefs of the Air Staff thoroughly?
Air Marshal Funnell: That's a difficult one Alan. I've had various people express various opinions to me on that over the years. My own feeling - and this goes back about 10 or 15 years - is that the best background for the position of CAS is to have held both command and staff positions in the middle ranks and to have done likewise at senior ranks. I believe the most appropriate, immediate background for a CAS is the position which is now Air Commander and that is exactly how it's worked out in Air Marshal Gratton's case. I say that because I think it's important for the commander of a fighting force to have a first hand and very strong knowledge of the operational side of the Air Force. I've had other people express quite the opposite view, that command of what was Support Command was a better background because it emphasised the importance of logistics support to operational performance. I also felt that some time out of the scene here in Canberra, associated with the operational side of the Air Force, gave the person moving into the position of CAS an opportunity to recharge his batteries, get some of that old fire back in his belly before he got to Canberra.

There is another point of view that the ideal approach is through the position of DCAS. That is what happened in the case of Air Marshal Newham and he might like to comment on that. I can see the reasoning behind that but I still believe the better approach is through the operational command.

Air Marshal Newham: Going back to the gist of your question, Alan, I believe that the system over many years has identified officers as front-runners and put them into career development posts and put them on to career development courses. It can be very annoying for the planners to find that these blokes then pull stumps well before air vice-marshal rank or even air commodore rank. This really blows your planning.

I had had the job of Senior Air Staff Officer, now Chief of Staff, at Operational Command. That was a very important post for me, it taught me a hell of a lot about the Air Force. I'd commanded Laverton, which had nine different units on it. I had a very good association with Support Command. I agree with Ray [Funnell] that it is a very important part of the Air Force and I would not favour one [functional] command before the other.

Before I became CAS I'd been out of Australia for two years and in the Department next to the Chief of the Air Staff for three years. I'd been DGOR, CAFOPS and DCAS. That gave me a pretty good look at the working of the committee system and gave me a very good look at the working of the Air Force from a receiving end, rather than the operational end. And then coming back after two years in Washington, the DCAS
post and experience was invaluable. That put me into an area of resource management which looked into Support Command, as it was called then, and that was very important. I had people briefing me for my meetings who were from the equipment and engineering side of the house. That is, from the minor program development, and also briefings from the organisation establishment, the staff that then backed up DCAS in his resource management. The DCAS post is very important. So there you are, I've had an each way bet. It's got to be done, and there are a number of ways of doing it as the classic book says.
What a splendid day we've had. As you appreciate, full credit for this inaugural RAAF History Conference goes to my predecessor. I believe he has set in train a very important process. Today, as the first of the series of conferences that we have in mind, we've examined the RAAF, air power and history extremely well. I think the exchanges with the questions and responses from the various speakers have been especially helpful.

I occasionally got the feeling - which a couple of those last questions strengthened - that perhaps I shouldn't have been sitting in the room here! When people asked about the process for selecting the Chief, I felt a little uncomfortable.

On a more serious note, I'm very conscious of the invaluable opportunity which today represented, of hearing from my three immediate predecessors what the Office of the Chief of the Air Staff is about. I think you'll all agree that they have done that exceptionally well. We have heard from them the main challenges which the ADF and the Air Force currently face. Additionally, Air Marshal Funnell articulated most clearly what is expected of a Chief of the Air Staff. It is a daunting challenge, but I look forward to the opportunity to serve the RAAF as CAS, and to continue the work of my predecessors.

I'd like to thank the people responsible for putting the conference together. As with all of these things, when they run smoothly - and I believe this one has, apart perhaps from the electronics - it is only because of the behind-the-scenes work that many people put in. Group Captain Hamwood has asked me to mention a number of people. The first is Mr Jeff Isaacs. When I read my notes on this conference the other night, I was intrigued to see that I should thank Mr Isaacs for his 'sketches'. Now, of course, you can see what that means. This is the first time I personally have seen these sketches of each CAS around the walls, and I think they have given just the right note to the conference. There are also three behind-the-scenes staff who deserve mention: Mr David Wilson for research assistance, and Mrs Sandra Di Guglielmo and Corporal Brad Ebert for administrative support.

Two other thanks. Firstly, to the participants. A conference like this doesn't work unless we get the right people to attend and those people are willing to participate. I thank you all for that contribution. And,
of course, the five speakers. They have made the conference. Starting with Dr Stephens and Dr Coulthard-Clark, and then with Air Marshal Evans, Air Marshal Newham and Air Marshal Funnell, we have had a splendid day. Please join me in thanking our five presenters.

Finally, a commercial. Next year's conference will be held on Thursday the 14th of October. Please make a note if you're interested. That will be the second in the series. The topic will be 'The RAAF in the Southwest Pacific Area' - a very interesting subject and one about which the RAAF, more than any other air force in the world, has the most expertise. There are many people alive and well who can contribute to that conference. Some are here today. If you have any particular views about how you think that conference should run, or who the speakers might be, or any other contribution, please approach the Air Power Studies Centre and give them your ideas.

To conclude, I thank you all again for your attendance, and Jo [Hamwood], for the Air Power Studies Centre's work in producing such a valuable and enjoyable conference.
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