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**THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER:
A STUDY OF OFFICIALS NEAR THE TOP OF THE ALBERTA PUBLIC SERVICE**

by

EDWARD CHARLES LESAGE JR., B.A., M.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Political Science

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

August 3, 1994

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**THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER: A STUDY OF OFFICIALS
NEAR THE TOP OF THE ALBERTA PUBLIC SERVICE**

submitted by

Edward C. Lesage, Jr., B.A., M.A.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Chair, Department of Political Science

Thesis Supervisor

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the roles and activities of Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) employed by the provincial government of Alberta, Canada. These officials are the most senior echelon of provincial public administrators enjoying protection under the Public Service Act, and they head the principal subdivisions of government departments.

Principal lines of inquiry for the study include: the extent to which ADMs and deputy ministers differ in role functioning, the extent to which ADMs and their subordinates differ, the nature of ADM influence, the ADM's role at the nexus of politics and administration, the nature of functional differences among selected ADM cohorts, the "merit" character of the ADM job, the burdens of corporate management that fall on ADMs, and the ADM role in managing extra-divisional, interdepartmental, and extra-organizational relationships. The study also includes an original inquiry into pertinent features of the historical development of the Alberta public service which provides an important context for an analysis of the ADM position.

The principal lines of inquiry are pursued through consideration of propositions and corollaries derived from a review of the literature and government documents defining job performance requirements. A variety of methods are used to collect data and information including a postal questionnaire with a return rate of 89 percent, over 60 interviews, and research into archival materials and the literature. Multiple regression analysis using dummy variables is the principal statistical method used.

Analysis reveals important functional differences between ADMs and both their deputy minister superiors and their executive managerial subordinates. ADMs are themselves functionally differentiated, which is a nuance that is understood but rarely systematically explored in public administration literature.

Analysis reveals that the merit system does appear to operate well and with few abuses, which is of special significance since Alberta politics is unique in promoting long-running governments with hegemonic control over the Legislative Assembly. More broadly, analysis suggests that the evolution of the ADM position is a metaphor for the evolution of the modern Alberta public administration.

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I dedicate this work to my daughter Julia, and to my parents, Edward and Vida LeSage.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1.0. The Objectives of the Study

This study develops an understanding of the work and significance of the assistant deputy minister's position in the Government of Alberta. The investigation adds to the body of public administration knowledge, since assistant deputy ministers (ADMs) have been little studied in Canada. ADMs are worthy of study since they hold high social and administrative rank and are arguably an administrative metaphor for contemporary public management in the provincial government.

Assistant deputy ministers do not operate in a vacuum. They are integrated into a web of relationships that extends upwards and downwards and horizontally through the provincial administration and into the larger bureaucratic and extragovernmental realms. To understand the role of the ADM, it is necessary to examine the particulars of these relationships. More generally, it is important to understand their context. Therefore, this study deals with the broader system and dynamics of Alberta executive public administration, and of the political system within which it functions.

This is a political science study with a focus on the ADM's position within the institutional structure of the Alberta government, ADM relations with key political and administrative actors, and the policy and "corporate" functions of the ADM position. Therefore, even though aspects of managerial leadership, communication, and control are considerations in this study, an in-depth investigation of the divisional management process is knowingly given less attention than it might be thought to deserve.

The investigation of administrative activities is largely focused on the ADM's role as a link between the highest echelons of governmental administration and the lower ranks, and as a manager of "external" relationships for the purposes of conducting governmental business. While it draws upon findings and perspectives found in the general management and sociological literature, the bulk of the literature cited is from political science and its public administration subfield.

Colin Campbell and George Szablowski's *The Superbureaucrats*¹; Joel Aberbach, Robert Putnam, and Bert Rockman's *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*²; and Ezra N. Suleiman's classic study of the French administrative class, *Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy in France: The Administrative Elite*³ inspire this study with their focus on the context, work, and origins of specific cohorts of government executives. In drawing upon these works, this study briefly examines the socioeconomic background, education, and careers of ADMs and other senior executives with attention to the political and institutional context within which these officials work. Chapter 2 is devoted to a political and administrative history, and to unique aspects of the Alberta experience.

Assistant Deputy Minister Operationally Defined

Assistant deputy ministers are defined as officials in the Alberta government *who bear the ADM title or who report directly to a deputy minister and are classified as either an Executive Manager II or Executive Manager I on the classification grid of the*

¹ Colin Campbell and George Szablowski, *The Superbureaucrats: Structure and Behaviour in Central Agencies* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979).

² Joel D. Aberbach, Robert Putnam, and Bert A. Rockman, *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

³ Ezra N. Suleiman, *Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy in France: The Administrative Elite* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974).

Personnel Administration Office. These officials are found within the 24 line departments of the Government of Alberta headed by deputy ministers, the Executive Council Office, and three agencies headed by executive manager level officials who report directly to ministers of Occupational Health and Safety, Public Safety Services, and the Public Affairs Bureau. These organizations represent the main ministerial departments of the Government of Alberta as it was organized in 1990 and 1991. Excluded are senior officials employed by the various boards, secretariats, crown corporations, foundations, and commissions of the government. In short, the study focuses on the "traditional" bureaucracy of the Alberta government.

According to official documents of the Personnel Administration Office, the responsibilities of Executive Manager I (EM I) officials are as follows:

This is executive work directing the activities of a province-wide program in an activity that directly affects a large segment of the population, or directing a departmental support program or interdepartmental support service having significant departmental or service-wide impact. Managerial actions are concentrated upon the coordination and direction of several major functions, the determination of priorities and the formulation of medium term plans or program objectives, and policy recommendations. Decision making in matters of program administration have a large impact on operating methods and carry significant financial and program implications.⁴

A companion description of Executive Manager II (EM II) responsibilities follows:

This is executive work directing and coordinating several interrelated although autonomous programs. This work is characterized by major responsibility for long-range program and fiscal planning and the formulation of policy recommendations. Positions in this class are charged with assessing the effectiveness and determining the direction and operating controls within which programs and interdepartmental support services are to be administered.⁵

⁴ Alberta Personnel Administration Office, "Management Job Descriptions" [undated mimeo.].

⁵ Ibid.

The ADM operational definition extends the purview of the study to a larger cohort of executive officials than those who solely hold the ADM title. If the study had been limited to only those bearing the assistant deputy minister title or one of its derivatives (e.g., assistant deputy provincial treasurer), it would have been based on 74 officials: 58 Executive Manager IIs and 16 Executive Manager Is. By expanding the definition to include officials who meet the operational criteria, the number of “ADMs” was increased to 125, of which 63 are EM IIs and 62 are EM Is.

The logic for a more encompassing operational definition of ADM is that assistant deputy minister is a working title that is not consistently applied across the government. Although most officials who head major program delivery divisions carry the assistant deputy minister title, there are administrative, planning, and other specialized officials at the executive level who are not so classified. For example, the heads of all the Personnel Administration Office’s principal divisions are listed as executive directors. This is the case even though all the top officials report to a deputy minister, and are classified at the EM I or EM II level. For many years the divisional heads in the Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs department (FIGA) were titled executive directors. However, inexplicably, in 1989 the executive director positions were renamed assistant deputy minister. While the position titles may have been changed in response to evolutionary developments in the department, there was no obvious evidence of an organizational change. In short, an ADM title is not an especially good indicator of the activities performed by the top line officials.

It might seem that the ADM title is much too vague to use in rigorous analysis. However, by providing an operational definition of assistant deputy ministers as officials

of executive rank who report directly to the deputy, it is possible to define a discrete cohort of officials and establish a consistent and meaningful positional definition.⁶

Two additional points to be made are that the operational definition is occasionally displaced by a more literal definition of assistant deputies. This shift is required for a chapter 2 discussion relating to the historical development of the position, since the record is murky as to which of the deputy's subordinates are classified at the executive level. Second, it is important to emphasize that the title assistant deputy minister is not without significance as it is currently used in the Alberta public service. The title has been operationally redefined for purposes of analysis and with guidance provided by knowledgeable senior officials. They point to the inconsistency in the use of the title and the lack of a clear link between the classification levels and the working title ADM. However, the same officials note that the title has import. Perhaps the best example of this is the prohibition that was placed on the number of officials described as ADMs in a given department during the 1970s. A limit of four appears to have been imposed to retain some measure of integrity for the title. While this limit was overrun by

⁶ An alternative to defining the principal cohort in this manner would be to use the EM I and EM II classification rankings. This approach has appeal, as the allocation of the EM I and EM II classifications is achieved following careful study of positional attributes by the Personnel Administration Office. However, more would be lost than gained by this approach, as it is ADMs that are the focus of the study and not the PAO classification divisions. Most Alberta EM II level officials carry the deputy minister title. Depending on the Personnel Administration Office printout used, in 1988-89 between 74 percent and 84 percent of Executive Manager II positions were identified by the assistant deputy minister title or its derivative. But not all EM IIs are ADMs and not all who carry the ADM title are EM IIs. Five Executive Manager IIs report to other EM IIs who are ADMs. It is worth noting that this relationship is restricted to the Attorney General (n = 4) and Treasury (n = 1) departments, but nonetheless it exists. In addition, 16 EM Is found within nine departments carry the ADM moniker. All of these EM Is report directly to deputy ministers and by this, and by their titles, clearly warrant consideration as ADMs. Moreover, the differences that are claimed to exist between EM I and EM II officials are not always evident. Some officials interviewed stated that their position would be downgraded upon their retirement or transfer, as government downsizing initiatives had stripped them of staff and responsibilities. Others claim that restructuring and downsizing had left them with greater responsibilities and greater numbers of staff reporting to them, but that reclassification to a higher rank was not something that they contemplated, given the exigencies of ballooning government debt, wage freezes, and staff layoffs, including cuts at the executive levels. Thus the executive manager level classification schemes are themselves suspect.

events and a change of political and senior administrative personnel in the Executive Council office, the import of the limit remained with some deputies and central agency executives. Moreover, there are deputy ministers who make distinctions between positions to which they affix the ADM title and those to which they do not. Thus, this "working" title has meaning for some deputy ministers and by extension for their staffs. However, this distinction largely disappears on a public-service-wide basis.

Why Study Assistant Deputy Ministers?

The introduction offers generalized justifications for a study of assistant deputy ministers. What follows is a detailed list of reasons. First, ADMs have received little academic attention in the Canadian public administration literature. If one could be certain that ADMs are indistinguishable from deputy ministers, the concern over the lacuna of ADM studies would not be a matter of concern. However, not only is there a lack of evidence on this point, but the record suggests that ADM, deputy ministerial, and other executive level jobs may differ in significant ways. This study provides insight into the differences between assistant deputy ministers and their deputy minister superiors. Indeed, the issue is forced by using a heuristic based on deputy ministerial work to structure inquiry into the ADM job. Insight is also gained into differences between ADMs and their executive manager subordinates.

Second, assistant deputy ministers merit attention quite simply because they are important officials. A number of studies include them as members of the Canadian state elite, although these studies do not distinguish ADMs from other senior bureaucratic officials.⁷ As elite members of society they presumably possess considerable power and influence which make them social actors deserving academic interest.

⁷ See Robert Presthus, *Elite Accommodation in Canadian Politics* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1973); Harvey Rich, "Higher Civil Servants in Ontario, Canada," *International Administrative*

Third, in the Government of Alberta ADMs are at the top of the principal departmental subunits which are usually titled divisions. This positioning suggests they exercise considerable influence and responsibility in policy formulation and program implementation. Moreover, they can be assumed to possess a higher level of contextual knowledge of technical matters, divisional operations, and particulars concerning external relationships in their areas of operation than their deputy ministers. This is probable given the disparate responsibilities of the deputy minister and his or her consuming concern about the needs of the minister. Under these circumstances it is likely that ADMs exercise considerable influence in dealing with the technical content of proposed policies, which necessarily are of interest to the deputy minister and the minister. That they possess the potential for such influence offers an additional reason for studying ADMs.

A fourth reason for studying ADMs concerns an ambiguity in the Canadian public administration literature relating to the particulars of the political-administrative interface. The deputy minister is portrayed as the "hinge" between the political and administrative domains of senior government. Other portrayals suggest that other high level officials, including ADMs, are also involved in this interface. Therefore the question is open as to the extent to which the interface between the administrative and bureaucratic realms resides with the deputy or is broader and includes ADMs. An investigation of the ADM position provides insight into this important question.

A fifth reason for studying ADMs relates to the argument that there are important differences in the practice of public administration which are defined by job function orientation, the type of department officials work within, departmental size, and various external exigencies.⁸ Systematic inquiry into these factors provides insight into the

Science Review 41, no. 1 (1975): 67-74; and Dennis Oslen, *The State Elite* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980).

⁸ A detailed account of these is contained in the chapter 3 literature review.

assistant deputy minister job and into factors that influence the work of other senior administrators in government.

A sixth reason for studying ADMs concerns the meaning and administration of "merit" in the Alberta public administration context. ADMs are of particular interest, as they are the highest level of officialdom falling under the aegis of Alberta's public service commissioner, and therefore are the merit officials who operate closest to the political arena. Consideration of ADM hiring and promotion practices provides a unique perspective on the vitality of the merit principle in the provincial government. In effect, if the merit principle is rigorously guarded at the ADM level, it can be assumed that the same vigilance is applied at lower levels. If there is evidence of rule-bending at the ADM level, the merit principle is diminished. Where merit is not honoured, or the rules are dealt with loosely, questions of higher service neutrality are raised.⁹

A seventh reason for studying Alberta ADMs relates to the metaphoric nature of the position. Using the position title as a guide, throughout the 1960s and as late as 1971, the first year of Progressive Conservative rule in Alberta, a maximum of three officials held positions titled assistant deputy in any given year. However, by 1976, there were over fifty officials sporting the title. Although in some instances the proliferation represented nothing more than a reprinting of stationery and re-lettering on the outside of office doors, many ADM positions were newly created and involved promoting from within the organization or recruiting from outside. The proliferation of ADM positions coincided with a wholesale revision of the structure and machinery of government that characterized the two initial Tory electoral mandates. Given the newness and centrality of

⁹ For a full discussion of the merit principle and its application at the provincial government level see J. D. Love, "The Merit Principle in the Provincial Governments of Atlantic Provinces," *Canadian Public Administration* 31, no. 1 (Fall 1988): 335-51.

assistant deputy ministers to these structures, it is not unreasonable to conceive of ADMs as symbols for the restructured public service of Peter Lougheed's Conservatives.

Since the late 1980s the Alberta public service has been aggressively scaling down operations, eliminating positions, and cutting administrative costs in an effort to balance the provincial budget. Great numbers of lower level officials have been released from employment and divisional, departmental, and governmental structures have been "rationalized." ADMs have sometimes found themselves colonels without regiments or only vestiges of them. The more common recent experience associated with downsizing is one of increasing responsibility for greater numbers of personnel and for an increasingly agglomerated organizational structures as spans of control are broadened. Hence, an ADM investigation provides a glimpse into administrative developments and the managerial dynamic of the Alberta public service circa 1990-91.

A final reason for studying ADMs is their importance to the operation of the departmental executive team. They exist within an executive ensemble which nominally includes the deputy, ADM peers, and in rare cases the ADM's managerial subordinates. Thus, investigation of the ADM position provides an avenue for insight into the workings of departmental decision making.

The ADM position is important in its own right, but it has been either ignored in the Canadian public administration literature or its particular contributions have been obfuscated in global analyses of public sector executives. Concentration on deputy ministers has created what might best be labeled as an academic "rain shadow" effect insofar as the assistant deputy is concerned. To be sure, the roles of ADMs and deputies are in many ways close enough, and are tied to one another in such a way as to obscure differences. Therefore, this is likely a study about particulars and a study of nuances. The evidence will have to be considered to pass definitive judgement on this point.

1.1. Principal Lines of Inquiry and the Organization of this Study

Principal Lines of Inquiry

The reasons for investigating the ADM position largely define the principal lines of inquiry for the study. Thus, the study examines either directly or indirectly the following matters:

- The extent to which ADMs and deputy ministers differ in role functioning, and as a related matter the extent to which care must be taken when reading the literature in order not to extrapolate characteristics of the deputy role to the next rank of executive positions.
- The extent to which the ADM job is representative of those at lower echelons of executive administration, and therefore the extent to which the findings of this study can be abstracted to lower levels of executive management.
- The nature of ADM influence, and the ways in which ADMs exercise influence.
- The degree to which ADMs are participants at the nexus of politics and administration and, in this, the extent to which their activities are similar to those of deputy ministers.
- The uniformity of ADM activity and, assuming differences, the degree of association with differences of selected factors.
- The “merit” character of the ADM job.
- The effect of organizational decline on executive management practice.
- The nature of collective departmental management at the executive level, and the burdens of corporate management that fall on ADMs.
- The nature of the ADM role in managing extra-divisional, interdepartmental, and extra-organizational relationships.

Organization of the Study

In addition to introducing the purpose of the study, chapter 1 provides a brief résumé of socioeconomic, educational, and career background characteristics of ADMs and other executive levels surveyed. The résumé provides a perspective on the social representation and professional character of the top ranks of the Alberta public service. Appendix A contains an extended note on data collection methods, including archival research, interviews with over sixty persons, and a mail questionnaire with a response rate of 89 percent of the executive management and deputy minister population.

Two broad themes run through chapter 2, which defines the political and administrative context in which Alberta ADMs perform. One theme emphasizes the continuity of certain political ideas and institutions found in Alberta, while the second one speaks to the recent changes (up to 1989) in the character of the provincial public service. The chapter places analyses in the following chapters in perspective and introduces institutional and structural arrangements.

Chapter 3 reviews five bodies of evidence which provide a basis for the development of an ADM work construct defined in terms of a set of propositions and corollaries. Although their lack of formality prevents them from being treated as true hypotheses, the propositions and corollaries have utility when applied in a quasi-hypothetical fashion, as is done in chapters 4 and 5.

The purposes of chapter 4 are to test the general validity of the ADM work construct defined in chapter 3 and to compare ADM functioning and task performance with those of deputy ministers and the third tier of executive management. Analysis uses quantitative data drawn from the 1990 Alberta ADM survey and pertinent interview material. Chapter 3 propositions and corollaries are referenced in terms of the support generated by findings for their suppositions. An analysis of the propositions is framed

within a heuristic drawn from Gordon Osbaldeston's study of deputy ministers that has three functional foci: policy formulating and advising, corporate representation, and departmental management.¹⁰

Chapter 5 analyzes dyadic relationships between ADMs and other key system actors. The first section examines actors who fall within what is defined as a policy integration network. These actors include the deputy minister, the minister, the minister's office, ADM peers within the department, and officials at similar rank in other departments, including central agency officials. The second section examines ADM interactions with selected actors of a legislative affairs network made up of members of caucus committees, government backbenchers, and opposition members of the legislature. The third section focuses on extragovernmental actors comprising private citizens, interest group and association representatives, and business persons. Among points considered in these examinations are the importance that ADMs assign to relations with the various actors, the purposes and formalities of interactions, initiation and symmetry of contacts, protocols associated with the interactions, and points of conflict.

Chapter 6 considers questions associated with the principal lines of inquiry in the light of research findings, contemplates the study's contribution to political science and academic public administration, and enumerates the limitations of its findings and fruitful avenues for further research.

1.2. Statistical Analysis

Three statistical procedures are used to organize and analyze the survey data: multiple regression analysis using dummy variables, the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric

¹⁰ Gordon Osbaldeston, *Keeping Deputy Ministers Accountable* (Scarborough, Ont.: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1989).

test, and factor analysis. The first is used extensively in the statistical analysis described in chapters 3 and 4, while the latter two are used sparingly.

In this study, multiple regression analysis uses nominal and ordinal variables depicting selected characteristics of ADMs and other public service executives. No interval variables are used as independent variables. Nominal and ordinal data are used for the independent variables (e.g., job function, departmental function, and executive level) by creating dummy variables.¹¹

Statistical tables generated by the software render an unstandardized regression coefficient that represents the difference between the average value of the dependent variable for the reference variable and the average value of the dependent variable for a dummy variable. These positive and negative values show the relative positioning of regression lines on the y-axis, as well as their slopes. However, with simple addition they are converted to represent average dependent variable values for the reference variable and other independent variables. These average values are displayed in the "Cohort Mean" column on the standard table to report multiple regression statistics (see table 4-1). Most readers can readily interpret these useful statistical averages, which are often the only ones that provide a link to the raw unit values used in the dependent variable measure. Unstandardized coefficients can be derived by calculating the difference between the reference value and the value for each dummy variable in the Cohort Mean column.

The term "cohort" is used in the regression tables since it is consistent with the nomenclature in the commentary. It is pertinent since it is a reminder that the coefficients are researcher-defined agglomerations.

¹¹ See Scott Bennett, *The Quantitative Approach in Political Science* (Queenston, Ont.: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 348.

Other information contained in the multiple regression table format includes standard error coefficients, standardized beta coefficients, t-test values (defined as “t-value”) and probability coefficients for each non-reference variable. The standard error (Std. Err.) is a measure of the sampling distribution and can be used to describe the variability of an independent cohort mean value. With these values being standardized the coefficients of each cohort can be compared to ascertain the “tightness” of responses for a given dependent variable.

Standardized Coefficients (Std. Coeff.) are a standardized representation of the unstandardized coefficients described above. Most of the analysis references the unstandardized coefficients, specifically the “Cohort Mean” statistic.¹² Standardized coefficients are useful when comparing factor analysis generated variables whose raw unit values have no ready meaning (see table 4-11). Thus, reference to the standardized coefficients makes sense.

T-test coefficients (t-value) and their derived probability coefficients (p.) measure the probability that there is a significant difference between the standard distribution of the reference cohort and the standard distribution of a dummy variable cohort. T-test probability values are found by controlling for other dummy variable cohorts in the equation. The relationships account for only a portion of the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable.¹³

Commentary in the analytical chapters focuses on the probability statistics associated with the t-test comparisons of a reference cohort and a dummy variable cohort. When ADMs are compared with deputy ministers and third tier executive manager

¹² Ibid., 339, for a description of the relative merits of focusing on unstandardized and standardized beta coefficients when interpreting multiple regression statistics.

¹³ Ibid., 334.

cohorts, ADMs are always defined as the reference variable. Where comparisons are made between ADM cohorts (e.g., job function, departmental function, departmental size), the practice is to use the cohort that chapter 3 propositions suggest is distinguished from one or more other cohorts as the reference variable.

A standard probability significance criterion of $p \leq .05$ is employed universally in the study. In some instances this is a conservative test of a supposition, since propositions and corollaries defined in chapter 3 permit one-tailed t-test analyses of relationships and the use of a significance criterion of $p \leq .10$. The analysis does not discriminate on this basis, although in several instances "weak" (i.e., $.10 \leq p \leq .05$) relationships are noted.

R-squared coefficients are reported on the standard table. Within the multiple regression equation is the squared multiple correlation value between the dependent variable and the combination of independent variables.¹⁴ If the statistic takes the value of 1, the independent variables account for all the variation in the dependent variable, but if the statistic is 0, the independent variables account for none of the variation. The standard table also includes an adjusted R-squared value which is "the square of the correlation adjusted for sample size and the number of coefficients in the regression equation."¹⁵ Since this is an unbiased estimate of the population's squared correlation coefficient, it provides a more accurate R-squared value.

In the majority of tables displaying regression statistics the R-squared values are quite small and those of the adjusted R-squared statistic are even smaller. While these results suggest that the independent variables have little impact on the dependent variable, this may be merely a function of sample size, which is only slightly over 100

¹⁴ Ibid., 340.

¹⁵ Daniel S. Feldman Jr., Rich Hoffman, Jim Gagnon, and Joe Simpson, *StatView II: The Solution for Data Analysis and Presentation Graphics* (Berkeley, Ca.: Abacus Concepts, 1987), 174.

when ADM cohorts are regressed on one another. The smallness of the values should not detract from the importance of the t-value probability coefficients which, along with selected F-test coefficients, are the foci of analytical commentary.

A significant F-test probability value, $p \leq .05$, indicates there are statistically significant differences among the independent variables. The t-test provides an even more discriminating analysis of the specific relationships. In several cases even though statistically significant F-test results are not shown, statistically significant t-test relationships are shown. In many instances it is the significance of these more discrete t-test relationships that is of greatest theoretical interest.

Selected use is made of the Kruskal-Wallis statistical test, which is a one-way analysis of variance used for comparing three or more cohorts.¹⁶ More specifically, this test detects differences among the mean ranks of groups for an ordinal dependent variable.¹⁷ With the Kruskal-Wallis test the null hypothesis is rejected when at least two of the groups have different distributions on the response variable. That is, the null hypothesis is rejected if the differences among the sample mean ranks are sufficiently large.

The "H corrected-for-ties" statistic—represented on chapter 4 tables as H (cft)—eliminates all cases in which respondents have similar results. This shows differences in cohort populations. The larger the value of the statistic, the higher the probability that there is a significant difference among cohorts. Significance levels are defined at $p \leq .05$.

An important reason for using the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis statistic is that it honours the ordinal character of the importance "scales" used in sections 2 and 3 of the

¹⁶ Ibid., 237–39.

¹⁷ See Alan Agresti and Barbara Finley, *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences*, 2d ed. (San Francisco: Dellen Publishing, 1986), 425–29.

questionnaire. Another reason is that it is more robust than parametric statistics when comparing different sized populations and when analysing small populations.

The Kruskal-Wallis test is used selectively in chapter 4. Since multiple regression reveals no essential differences in statistically significant distinctions among cohorts, the less discriminating Kruskal-Wallis statistic is abandoned in later sections of chapter 4 and chapter 5 in favour of the multiple regression test. In the regression test the statistical package corrects for small size and variable numbers.

Factor analysis is used to create selected scales and to define groupings of key systems actors which are analyzed focusing on their relationships with ADMs. Factor analysis results are displayed in tabular form only once, since all the table results are discussed in some detail in the text.

1.3. Selected Demographic Facts about ADMs and Other Executives¹⁸

Alberta's executive bureaucracy is uncharacteristically representative of the general population when compared with various national public services¹⁹ and even with the meagre data for the provincial public service of the Social Credit era.²⁰ This is not to minimize representational inequities, the most pronounced of which relates to gender. Although this pattern is changing, as greater numbers of women appear in managerial and

¹⁸ Commentary in this section is presented without statistical elaboration or intensive reference to the corroborating literature. This parsimonious strategy is employed to effect a brief introduction to demographic and related background facts. The source for the descriptive analysis of the ethnic background, socioeconomic class, and educational level of ADMs is data captured in section 4 survey data, the telephone book analysis of senior officials' careers that is described in Appendix A, and selected documents prepared by the Alberta Personnel Administrative Office.

¹⁹ See Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 47-67, and Barbara Wake Carroll, "The Structure of the Canadian Bureaucratic Elite: Some Evidence of Change," *Canadian Public Administration* 34, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 359-72.

²⁰ See Frederick George Hulmes, "The Senior Executive and the Fifteenth Alberta Legislature: A Study in the Social and Political Background of Membership" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta, 1971).

executive ranks, the progression is slow and uneven. Women are generally absent from senior management posts in program delivery lines, are almost entirely absent from ADM jobs, and are only marginally more in evidence at the third tier level of officialdom. To the extent that routes to the top and influence within departments reside primarily in the program delivery positions, an absence of women takes on special meaning; they continue to be largely excluded from the most influential posts.

Persons of Anglo-Celtic background remain significantly over-represented in the executive ranks. This is particularly true at the deputy minister level. However, this pattern is being eroded as persons of diverse ethnic background are increasingly being found in the executive ranks. The sons and daughters of immigrants are well represented among higher officialdom, and while many are the offspring of British immigrants, the majority are of other ethnic stock. Immigrants themselves appear to be able to enter the service with ease, and this includes members of visible minorities, although those of African heritage are all but entirely absent. More noticeable by their absence are people of French and of North American aboriginal heritage, who are significantly under-represented in the higher public service if their presence in the general Alberta population is used as a measure.

Technocratic and professional qualifications which promote upper- and middle-class representation are the basis for most recruitment in the Alberta public service, and yet there is an uncharacteristically high level of representation of persons from farming and working-class backgrounds. With this in mind, surprisingly, there is an under-representation of those identified as coming from the lower-middle class whose fathers worked in skilled trades and clerical occupations.

Three conditions are responsible for the uncharacteristic representation of those from farming and working-class backgrounds. First, the structural changes that occurred

in the Alberta social and economic structure during the 1950s and 1960s literally pushed the sons and daughters of farmers and the children of a large labouring class into an urban setting. Second, commensurate with the push was economic opportunity, as the government grew during the province's conversion from a rural to an urban society. However, for this to be realized it was necessary for the progeny of the traditionally under-represented to have access to a university education. The third condition was an educational opportunity made available through the general expansion of the Alberta and Canadian governments' investment in education during the 1960s.

Even though there is a middle-class bias to the higher public service, it does not appear to draw the sons and daughters of the socioeconomic elite. No executives responding to the 1990 survey reported having a physician as a parent. Only two are the children of lawyers, and they work in the Attorney General department, which in terms of career tracks is isolated from the rest of the civil service.

Higher education is clearly a requisite to gaining access to the highest executive ranks in the public service. The amount and type of education one receives also has a bearing on the velocity with which an official moves to the top and into a deputy position. Those with more than five years of higher education tend to secure executive positions earlier in their careers than those with fewer than five years of higher education. Executives with political science undergraduate degrees are disproportionately represented among those who are promoted rapidly at a young age, although this phenomenon is also related to having a law degree.

An educational background with a business orientation, i.e., a Bachelor of Commerce degree, a Master of Business Administration degree, a bachelor's or master's degree in economics, or a professional accounting designation, does not provide officials with an advantage in moving quickly up the hierarchy, but it is strongly associated with

lateral mobility within the system. These credentials are also notably present at the deputy level. The strong correlation between business administration credentials and lateral movement is explained in part by the fact that most financial and many personnel officials hold business-related degrees. It is relatively easy for finance and personnel officials to move laterally within the Alberta public service. As business credentials are pronounced at the deputy level, and as several deputies have in recent years moved laterally, they contribute to the mobility correlation.

Data reveal that in recent years there is a greater incidence of shifting between departments. Whether this pattern represents the first stage in the evolution of a generalist manager cadre is an open and interesting question. Premier Getty's administration provided a more receptive climate for the development of such a cadre by promoting an executive development program, and encouraging career assignments in other departments and outside the government, yet the government has never openly declared its interest in developing a cadre. It is likely that lateral movement has been promoted by a variety of factors, not the least of which is a tight outside job market and a promotional "job lock" within departments. Officials who have been successful within the public service and have established residence in Edmonton are not likely to move elsewhere, especially as their skills are most marketable within the Alberta public service. For many executives and managers, a move within the service is undoubtedly the most appealing career choice.

Alberta's public service is nominally an entrepreneurial career system.²¹ During the years of economic boom and public service build-up (1973-1981) there was a high

²¹ Aberbach and his Comparative Elite Project (CEP) colleagues identify "two ideal types of recruitment system, differing in the permeability of the recruitment channels. At one extreme are what we may term *guild systems*, which require long apprenticeship within a single institution as a prerequisite for admission to the elite. At the other extreme are *entrepreneurial systems*, characterized by a high degree of lateral entry into the elite from outside careers and institutions. Guild systems ensure that elites will be more

rate of lateral entry resulting from aggressive recruiting. Many officials also left the public service, or changed jobs within their departments or within the service to improve their personal situations. In recent years a succession pattern has developed whereby most executives have been recruited from within the public service, even though lower levels of management are still recruited from the outside. Therefore, while the service generally does not function as a guild career system, wherein recruitment occurs only at the lowest levels of the organization, it has come to resemble one at the top level as most officials are promoted from within the service into executive management. This is the dominant pattern despite the increase of lateral movement at the executive levels.

Some career paths can be identified, although there is no general pattern for arriving at the top. Within the guild-like departments (e.g., Environment, Personnel Administration Office, Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, Attorney General, Career Development and Employment, Economic Development, and Recreation), progress to ADM positions in the program delivery areas normally involves a slow upward climb. Administrative and operational support executives responsible for finance, personnel administration, and procurement tend to move laterally across the system, taking on increasingly more responsible postings. Few of these officials have served in only one department. Tory governments have occasionally parachuted political administrators directly into ADM and other high level jobs. However, the incidence of these occurrences is low in relation to the larger pattern of career placements. Moreover, the activity seems to have lessened in recent years. A separate career path into the ADM ranks exists for women. Whatever their initial professional focus and training, women tend to make it to the ADM level by assuming policy or administrative and operational roles.

experienced and more fully socialized into the norms of the elite institutions. On the other hand, entrepreneurial systems provide the elite with freshets of new ideas and with exposure to the skills and experiences of other social institutions." See Joel D. Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 67-68.

Increasing numbers of "baby boomers" are filling the executive ranks and replacing a retiring generation of Lougheed-era appointees. Although this study does not examine the attitudes of this new breed, the new recruits seem to embrace the need for a leaner and more efficient public service. This observation is undoubtedly a disappointment for those who might expect to find evidence of an "Aquarian conspiracy" among the newest ADMs. The ethos expressed by John Manion²² that the contemporary challenge and role of public administrators is to effect better management seems to have been accepted unreservedly by most interviewed, and most openly and vocally by the newest ADM recruits.

²² John L. Manion, "New Challenges in Public Administration," *Canadian Public Administration* 31, no. 1 (Summer 1988): 234-46.

CHAPTER 2

THE POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTEXT

2.0. Introduction

Two broad themes run through this chapter. One emphasizes the continuity of certain political ideas and institutions found in Alberta. The second points to profound political-administrative changes that were in motion during the field research. The chapter portrays a unique political, policy, and administrative environment in which elements of the established order are rapidly eroding while other elements stand solid. For assistant deputy ministers (ADMs), it is a turbulent administrative environment.

At the administrative level many established ways of doing things continue, but they may not be either efficacious or entirely relevant. As new practices and structures evolve, they are often not fully comprehended or particularly apt. Assistant deputy ministers and other senior administrative officials are often unclear about “the rules of the game” or, when clear about the rules, are often inexperienced in executing them. Therefore, there are elements of ADM work, described in the following chapters, that are often in a state of transition. Parenthetically, as there are many elements of the existing order that have not changed, other practices reflect the circumstances of the Alberta political-administrative regime that fostered them. Thus, old and new structures, ideas, and practices commingle in the province’s politics and public administration.

By some measures, in recent years the Alberta political-administrative context has been less touched by the forces of change than many other Canadian political jurisdictions. The province has been ruled by a Progressive Conservative government for

over 20 years and, it is often argued, has been ruled by parties with a common political outlook for nearly 80 years. This contrasts with the experience of many other provinces where governing parties have come and gone in rapid succession, often with sharp changes in ideological perspective. And yet the appearance of political stability in Alberta camouflages institutional change that a great many observers predict is imminent. While ADMs do not exhibit identifiable patterns of behaviour betraying their apprehensions about this change, one can speculate that it significantly affects personal and institutional relationships in the province's political-administrative system.

The fate of the traditional political order may not weigh heavily on officials' minds as more immediate concerns press in on them. The public service has experienced the roller coaster fortunes of the province's boom and bust economy which, with its reliance on energy revenues, is laid bare to the wild swings of international pricing structures. Since 1986 the provincial government has had to deal with a genuine economic bust. As a consequence, at the time the field research was being conducted, many ADMs were dismantling organizations that only a few years earlier they had constructed. In addition to the emotional toll involved, more than a few officials were grappling with how to meet the challenges before them. In a very brief time they had to change their orientation from being builders, to being custodians, and then to being axmen. Those not able to make such transitions were replaced by a new guard of younger ADMs whose qualifications and outlook better suited them to wield an ax.

ADMs are themselves components of governmental structure. The Alberta government's executive management structure is a recent innovation coinciding with the Progressive Conservative administrative reforms of the 1970s. Creation of the executive management structure was a response to ideas about how a government should be organized and run. Moreover, the executive management structure (including ADM

positions) was created to effect an aggressive expansion of state activity. All this adds to the complexity of the contemporary circumstance as the Progressive Conservatives seek to distance themselves from their signature policies, and strive to dismantle the very apparatus they created. The unevenness of their endeavour is a reflection of both political limitations and the fact that the structure within which the effort is being conducted is one that was created in a different time for a different purpose.

Two additional pertinent topics are considered in the chapter: centralized control of policy and administration, and contemporary personnel administration practices in the province as they relate to the ranks of senior management. The brief exploration of centralized control serves as a prolegomenon to detailed discussion of this topic in following chapters. It is important to examine contemporary personnel administration in order to deal with the process by which ADMs are hired, thus laying the base to address the question of whether Alberta's "merit" machinery is indeed meritorious. The latter point bears directly on the former, since ADMs are ostensibly the highest "merit" appointments in the Alberta public service. As stated in chapter 1, these officials are of particular interest as their political purity represents the merit system's line in the sand against politicization. On the one hand, if ADM appointments are not politicized one can assume the public service tends to be technocratically neutral. On the other hand, if there is evidence of politicization there is a question as to how pervasive it is. In Alberta these issues are of special interest, as the province has a long legacy and strong rhetoric of "good government" but these are coupled with long-term party hegemony in the Legislative Assembly.

2.1. The Changing Political Context

Alberta's political history is unique in its coupling of long serving governments and its electorate's preferences for repeatedly returning overwhelming government party

majorities to the legislature.¹ The elections of 1905, 1909, 1935, 1944, 1948, 1952, 1959, 1963, 1967, 1975, 1979, and 1982 all produced victories in which the government party won over 85 percent of the Legislative Assembly.² The 1959 and 1963 elections produced Social Credit legislative majorities that saw roughly 95 percent of the seats held by Premier Ernest Manning's party. Peter Lougheed achieved victories of the same magnitude in 1979 and 1982. Consequently, over long stretches of Alberta political history there has been no effective parliamentary opposition in the Legislative Assembly.

Another notable feature of Alberta's political history is the speed with which governing party legislative majorities have eroded. The norm is crushing defeat, after which the electorate relegates the former governing party to the political dustbin. The pattern began in 1921 with the defeat of the Liberal government (1905–1921), which lost to the radical United Farmers of Alberta (UFA)—a commonweal association that joined the electoral politics fray only a few years earlier. While the Liberals remained politically competitive, they would never again form a government, nor would the party enjoy anything resembling true electoral success.³ Alberta's most dramatic reversal of political fortunes came in 1935 with the Social Credit League's defeat of the UFA, which lost all

¹ Rand Dyck is among many who have observed the unique feature of Alberta's preponderant majorities. He notes in the conclusion to his systematic survey of provincial politics that "Alberta obviously ranks as the leader of the one-party dominant provinces in both popular votes and seats since 1960 (as well as before)." See Rand Dyck, *Provincial Politics in Canada* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1986), 581. By Dyck's account the 1935–1971 Social Credit governments of premiers William Aberhart, Ernest Manning, and Harry Strom combined to make the Socred run the fourth longest in Canadian provincial political history. If Ralph Klein's Progressive Conservative government, elected in the late spring of 1993, runs out its mandate, the Alberta Tories will rank as the seventh longest-serving provincial government, with a total of 27 years in office. See *Provincial Politics in Canada*, 580.

² Ibid., 496.

³ The Liberals would field more candidates than the dominant UFA party in the 1926 election, and fielded respectable slates in the following two elections. A Liberal resurgence of sorts occurred in 1930 when the party upped its seats from 7 to 11, and in 1955 when the number of seats jumped from 4 to 15. In both elections that followed these "pinnacles" of electoral success, the Liberals lost their gains and more.

39 of its seats and simply disappeared.⁴ Thus, early in the province's political history a pattern of hegemonic government party rule was established.

In his classic commentary on Alberta politics, C. B. Macpherson sketches the principal features of hegemonic government party rule, which he labeled a "quasi-party" system.⁵ According to Macpherson, the quasi-party system embodies attributes of the common alternative party system in that it features opposition parties with provincial election organizations. Yet, other important characteristics exist which are at odds with the traditional alternative system. The quasi-party system embodies a non-party system in its emphasis on "business government". That is, the preponderant emphasis is on administration rather than on policy formation. In addition, a quasi-party system leans toward one-party government, "especially with its rejection of the orthodox notion that a party is beneficial, and in its belief in a general will of the community."⁶ According to Macpherson, the quasi-party system's electorate uses the ballot to register its satisfaction with the government's stewardship, while the government calls elections as referenda to confirm public support of its stewardship. Most important, the government is to be above partisan politics.

⁴ Tom Flanagan observes that the electoral strength of the UFA resided in the "heartland" of Alberta, which would also be where Social Credit would garner support. However, the Social Credit League had broader appeal than the UFA, which was ultimately a farmers' party that appealed particularly to British, German, and Scandinavian ethnic stock. Continuing Liberal support was found in the large urban centres of Edmonton and Calgary and in the northern French and Ukrainian ethnic enclaves. Flanagan describes other electoral regions of the province—besides the heartland—as being Edmonton/Calgary, the Mountain Constituencies which included coal mining areas predisposed to the labour-oriented Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, and the northern constituencies which featured concentrated populations of ethnic French and Ukrainians predisposed for many years to the Liberals. See Thomas E. Flanagan, "Ethnic Voting in Alberta Provincial Elections, 1921–1975," in *Society and Politics in Alberta: Research Papers*, ed. Carlo Caldarola (Agincourt, Ont.: Methuen, 1979), 304–21.

⁵ See C. B. Macpherson, *Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 237ff.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 238–39.

Peter Lougheed's 1971 Progressive Conservative triumph continued the quasi-party tradition. Lougheed's Tories came to power by taking 49 seats in the 75-member Legislative Assembly and then increased their hold on the government in 1975 by taking 69 seats.⁷ In the 1979 election the Conservatives won 74 of 79 Legislative Assembly seats. Alberta's electorate returned the same numbers in the 1982 election, the Tories' high-water mark electoral year, when they received a whopping 62.2 percent of the popular vote and 94 percent of Legislative Assembly seats.⁸ The Social Credit party disappeared with only slightly less ignominy than the United Farmers of Alberta.⁹ Only four "Socreds" won seats in the 1975 election. Not one Social Credit representative returned to the legislature in 1982.¹⁰ Tory domination of the legislature was so complete in 1982 that the New Democrat party, with only two members, formed the official opposition.

Overwhelming Conservative majorities eroded under Don Getty's premiership (1985–1993). Tory fortunes diminished in the 1986 election when the number of seats sank to 61 in an expanded 83 seat assembly (73 percent), and the share of the popular vote shrank dramatically to 51 percent. In the 1989 "snap" election, the Tory benches fell to 59 in the 83 constituency seat assembly (71 percent), and the percentage of the popular vote dropped to an unprecedented low of 44.4 percent.

⁷ See J. A. Long and F. Q. Quo, "Alberta: Politics of Consensus," in *Canadian Provincial Politics*, ed. Martin Robin (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall, 1978), 22.

⁸ The source for these statistics and those which follow is Allan Tupper, "Alberta Politics: The Collapse of Consensus," in *Party Politics in Canada*, 6th ed., ed. H. G. Thorburn (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall, 1991), 455. See table 1, "Party Standings—Alberta General Elections."

⁹ See Alvin Finkel, *The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), chapter 11, for an historical account of the disintegration of the Social Credit party before and after the 1971 election. From this account the party still appears to exist although it has become, in Finkel's words, "moribund and its corpse invaded by racist body-snatchers" (p. 200).

¹⁰ Two former Social Credit MLAs ran as independents in the 1982 election.

Figure 2.1.—Annual Provincial Revenues, Expenditures and Deficits: 1945-1989¹¹

The dramatic reversal in the status of the provincial treasury, so apparent in figure 2.1, undoubtedly diminished Tory political fortunes following the 1982 election. Albertans and the Progressive Conservative government enjoyed extraordinary good luck from 1973 to 1981 as energy sector revenues shot to the stratosphere. In 1971 provincial revenues barely topped a billion dollars; by 1982 they would exceed 10 billion dollars. But then the boom in the oil patch ended with the implementation of the National Energy Program and from 1982 the contribution of energy sector revenues steadily shrank as a proportion of the provincial budget.¹² Provincial revenues continued to climb up to 1986,

¹¹ Compiled by the author from Alberta annual provincial public accounts records.

¹² In fiscal year 1982/83 oil royalties accounted for approximately 38 percent of all government revenues; by 1989/90 the contribution declined to a mere 13 percent. See *Insight into Government* (Edmonton) 6, no. 12 (for the week ending November 22, 1991): 2.

for although the energy boom was over, the province continued to receive oil and gas royalties, and enjoyed the fruits of investment and interest revenues from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.¹³ Moreover, assets were divested which had been acquired during headier times. The government also put a lid on spending beginning in 1982 and maintained a strong expenditure control program until the run up to the 1986 provincial election.

With a precipitous 1986/87 drop in world-wide oil and gas prices, the revenue bubble burst. The resulting drop in revenues resulted in a political pratfall for the new Getty government, as well as a serious administrative challenge. Alberta no longer had the economic muscle to cushion the unanticipated shortfall in energy revenues and it would precipitate an unheard-of four billion dollar deficit in 1987 despite a sweeping austerity campaign launched by the premier. The deficit incurred that year was an astonishing \$1,561 (1986 dollars) per capita.¹⁴ In subsequent years the provincial debt soared as the Tories continued to run up deficit after deficit. In 1986 Alberta's General Revenue Fund and Capital Fund debt was almost zero; by 1993 it had ballooned to over \$14 billion (or \$5,500 per person).¹⁵ By the early 1990s debt servicing charges would be

¹³ The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund (AHSTF) was created to serve as a "rainy day" investment fund in addition to bringing a measure of expenditure discipline to government operations through diverting revenue to the fund. Beginning in 1976, massive amounts of revenues were diverted into the AHSTF and therefore not made available for program expenditures. Coincidental with the 1979 election the province announced a billion dollar municipal debt retirement program which allowed a number of rural municipalities to create their own micro-versions of the AHSTF and more generally permitted local authorities to reduce debt loads which had rapidly escalated during the period of high growth necessitating all manner of new infrastructure and service development. See "The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund: An Overview of the Issues," *Canadian Public Policy* 6 (February 1980), for essays on the creation and boom-time administration of the fund.

¹⁴ See Melville McMillan and Allan Warrack, "Alberta's Fiscal Situation: Identifying the Problem, Looking for Solutions," Publication of the Western Centre for Economic Research, no. 14 (Edmonton, Alberta: Western Centre for Economic Research, 1993), 6.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

the fourth largest expenditure item, exceeded only by expenditures in the social services, education, and health areas.¹⁶

As a measure of the depth of the province's fiscal woe, by 1990 its per capita debt and debt servicing costs equaled the Canadian all-province average. Thereafter, Alberta's debt surpassed the all-province average. Indebtedness on this scale was something Albertans thought they had put behind them decades ago, and as it followed on a decade of unprecedented boom, it was difficult to comprehend.

Economic decline effected more profound changes than just those bearing on the Conservatives' electoral successes. Writing shortly after the 1989 provincial elections, Allan Tupper suggests that the 1986 and 1989 elections reflect a watershed transformation in the essential character of Alberta politics. Tory difficulties prompted by economic reversal, scandals, and debate over the province's proper priorities diminished the myth of "business government," along with the public's confidence that the government was operating in the interest of the whole polity.¹⁷ Tupper's comments follow those of Gurston Dacks, who foresaw a similar trend after the 1986 election. Dacks argues that as revenues decrease, Alberta's politics will increasingly come to resemble those of other provinces, with class cleavages and other dimensions of social differentiation increasing in importance.¹⁸ Dacks assumes that these developments increase partisan competition in the Legislative Assembly and stimulate a broader policy debate. In sum, it can be argued that the classic features of the quasi-party system are

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Tupper, "Alberta Politics: The Collapse of Consensus," 461ff.

¹⁸ Gurston Dacks, "Grant Notley and Democracy in Alberta," in *Socialism and Democracy in Alberta: Essays in Honour of Grant Notley*, ed. Larry Pratt (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1986), 194.

eroding away and with them the electorate's disposition to entrust any party with long-term hegemonic rule.

2.2. The Changing Governmental Policy Agenda

The Lougheed administration's approach to governance was a radical departure from that of the Social Credit government even though the Tories' 1971 ascendancy was within the Alberta hegemonic tradition. Peter Lougheed assumed power with a desire to resituate Alberta and the Canadian West in the Canadian political economy. According to Larry Pratt, the Tories represented the new urban bourgeoisie that had grown rapidly in the years following the province-transforming 1949 Leduc oil strike. This new bourgeoisie emerged in lock-step with Alberta's post-war transformation from a largely rural to a predominantly urban society.¹⁹ The province's burgeoning managerial, professional, and white-collar occupations furnished the principal elements of the new class.²⁰

This new bourgeoisie was impatient to assert itself in matters of enterprise and to secure its economic future. Although largely created by the new wealth flowing from extra-provincial investment into the Alberta economy, by the late 1960s the prevalent arriviste bourgeois view was that Albertans did not enjoy a sufficient share of the

¹⁹ Farmers accounted for the following percentages of the Alberta labour force in the years listed: 1941 (56.0), 1951 (38.4), 1961 (25.2), 1971 (15.1).

²⁰ More specifically this new bourgeoisie comprised three groups: (1) the owners and managers of the few Alberta-based corporations large enough to compete nationally and internationally; (2) a large body of well educated and upwardly mobile professionals such as corporate lawyers, economic and financial consultants, engineers, geologists, and other scientists and technical experts providing services of a specialized nature to the petroleum industry and government; (3) a state-administrative elite, occupying "the top bureaucratic posts within the public sector, particularly, though not exclusively, in government departments and boards charged with the task of managing the province's resources, negotiating with other governments, investing the huge revenue surpluses of the 1970s and charting future economic directions." See John Richards and Larry Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), 167. For a recent critique of Richards and Pratt's "new class" thesis see Edward Bell, "The Rise of the Lougheed Conservatives and the Demise of Social Credit in Alberta: A Reconsideration," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 26, no. 3 (September 1993): 507-22.

economic activity. Peter Lougheed voiced this sentiment when he championed a "third phase" of economic development.²¹ Lougheed's third phase would presumably push the province beyond dependence on central Canadian and foreign capital, and beyond its heavy dependence on agriculture and oil and gas extraction.²² The engines of this "third phase" were to be economic diversification, natural economic advantages that existed owing to Alberta's proximity to primary oil and gas production, and successful investments of moneys realized from royalties. Within this scheme there was a vision of a politically strong and financially independent New West in which Alberta would play a central role.

The "third phase" strategy had significant implications for the province. A hallmark of Social Credit was its pronounced lack of state activism in economic development. The Tories' "third phase" presumed an energetic, interventionist application of state power and resources. It entailed a province-building approach wherein government works on behalf of and in concert with enterprise to stimulate economic opportunity and growth.

Such use of state power and resources is perhaps thought by casual observers to be at odds with the province's bedrock political conservatism. In reality, Alberta's political conservatism has its roots in turn-of-the-century progressivism and populism.²³

²¹ This third phase would follow the "first phase" agricultural and mineral extraction economic epoch and the "second phase" energy economy.

²² Richards and Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism*, 161.

²³ This point merits an extended exploration that is not possible within the limits of this study. The progressivist heritage of Alberta politics is well documented in Macpherson's *Democracy in Alberta* and in W. L. Morton, *The Progressive Party in Canada*, 2ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962). Readers are directed to Morton's chapter 2, pp. 36ff, especially, for a discussion of Alberta's progressivist and populist roots. The connection between turn-of-the-century and post-World-War-II American political conservatism is made best by Richard Hofstadter in the introduction to his *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F. D. R.* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1955). The same shift is observed in Morton (*supra.*), and more recently by Alvin Finkel in *The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1989). See chapter 5. The reader is also directed to E. C. Manning, *Political Realignment*.

Basic to understanding progressivism is that philosophically it has two opposing views of state intervention.²⁴ While the progressives were suspicious of the state, they believed that its power could be put to good use. These opposing views not only existed within separate camps of the progressive movement but also resided uneasily within the hearts of many progressives. Indeed, the first Social Credit government of Premier William Aberhart was aggressively interventionist in selected sectors—most particularly the financial sector. It was not inconsistent with its progressive roots that Social Credit would later transform into a regime that held itself as a Canadian bulwark against socialism and as a champion of pay-as-you-go government. Lougheed's interventionism represented another turn of the wheel whereby government inserted itself into the affairs of enterprise, all in the public interest.²⁵ The justification for this intervention was to establish and safeguard Albertans' heritage through stimulating and managing the province's wealth. But the motivation was not solely ideological, since the new indigenous entrepreneurial class, in particular, had much to gain, and therefore a rubric was necessary to justify and guide political and economic action. Progressivist ideas were not only handy, but they sprang directly from the Alberta political experience.

Although Lougheed's "third phase" policy agenda gained definition and substance over the span of the Tories' first four years, the government moved quickly to establish

Challenge to Thoughtful Canadians (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1967), for the former premier's exposition of his new theory of "social conservatism." See chapter 4.

²⁴ See James A. Stever, "The Dual Image of the Administrator in Progressive Administrative Theory," *Administration and Society* 22, no. 1: 39–57. Stever's point of reference is taken from Hofstadter's discussion of types of progressivism in *The Age of Reform*, 131–73.

²⁵ For a discussion of the character of Western Canadian provincial government economic interventions, see S. D. Berkowitz, "Forms of State Economy and the Development of Western Canada," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 4, no. 3: 287–312. Writing in 1979, Berkowitz observes that in relative terms Alberta registered notably less direct state intervention in the provincial economy than other prairie provinces, notwithstanding the rapid growth of "state-directed" activity during the 1970–1975 period. Berkowitz also makes important observations concerning the political legacy of prairie progressivism and populism. See "Forms of State Economy," 304ff.

means to reify it. Only months into its mandate the government increased royalties on the province's depleting oil reserves to demonstrate its intent to break with the rentier policies of Social Credit and to establish its credentials as a government acting on behalf of Albertans' interests. While this move brought new revenues into the treasury, the serendipitous windfall revenues furnished by the international oil shocks of 1973 and 1977 vivified the third phase vision.

The massive revenues that flowed into treasury coffers between 1973 and 1981 permitted a government bent on securing a new economic order to engage in a heretofore unknown bout of province building.²⁶ Alberta invested funds in the development of primary and secondary industry, in upgrading the transportation and communications infrastructure, and in encouraging the development of a home-grown financial sector.²⁷ Perhaps the better known investments were in tar sands development and the purchase and relocation of Vancouver-based Pacific Western Airlines to Calgary.²⁸ Treasury revenues were invested in assisting local governments and non-governmental

²⁶ Larry Pratt was the first to write about this phenomenon in Alberta, and the point has been taken up as an accepted fact in subsequent literature focusing on the Lougheed era. See L. R. Pratt, "The State and Province-building: Alberta's Development Strategy," in *The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power*, ed. Leo Panitch (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 133–64. Pratt bolsters the argument made in his original analysis in chapter 7 of Richards and Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism*. Others writing about province building include Cynthia Bojcekho, "Lougheed's Energetic Bureaucrats," (Master's thesis, University of Alberta, 1982), and, more recently, Frederick Engelmann, "Grant Notley and Democracy in Alberta," in *Socialism and Democracy in Alberta: Essays in Honour of Grant Notley*, ed. Larry Pratt (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1986), 172–85. For a critique of the "province building" notion, see R. A. Young, Phillippe Faucher, and André Blais, "The Concept of Province-Building," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 17, no. 4 (December 1984): 783–818.

²⁷ See Allan Tupper, "Opportunity and Constraint: Grant Notley and the Modern State," in *Socialism and Democracy in Alberta: Essays in Honour of Grant Notley*, ed. Larry Pratt (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1986), 88–111, for an overview of what Tupper labels the "strong state" Conservative approach to provincial governance. Other surveys of Tory economic policy include Robert L. Mansell and Michael B. Percy, *Strength in Adversity: A Study of the Alberta Economy* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1990), and Allan Tupper, Larry Pratt, and Ian Urquhart, "The Role of Government," in *Government and Politics in Alberta*, ed. Allan Tupper and Roger Gibbins (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1992), 31–66.

²⁸ Larry Pratt, *The Tar Sands: Syncrude and the Politics of Oil* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1976).

organizations to develop their capacity to accommodate present and future growth. Health and post-secondary education expenditures rapidly escalated as a result of aggressive capital programs and hiring. Large investments were made in medical and high technical research and development. The same was true for primary and secondary education expenditures, and a range of assistance programs to municipalities. Indeed, in 1979 the province implemented a billion dollar municipal debt reduction program.²⁹

The treasury lucre that flowed from energy revenues and the boom time economy sparked by the oil and gas bonanza was also used to enhance Albertans' quality of life. Investments in culture, parks, and recreation programs grew substantially. Parks and recreation expenditures were made, in part, to enhance tourism but they were largely devoted to bolstering leisure opportunities for Albertans. Cultural groups and arts organizations also received unprecedented funding. Established entities such as Calgary's Glenbow Museum and Edmonton's Citadel Theatre received new facilities celebrated for their modernity and elegance. Even welfare expenditures ballooned. Part of this occurred as a result of rapid increases in basic allowances to keep pace with Alberta's rapidly escalating cost of living index. Another part was fueled by the "gold rush" population flow into the province.

Sometime during the early 1980s the Tory province-building agenda was supplanted by a more timid and less expansive program. The 1982 reversal of the province's economic fortunes is arguably the date on which to peg the change. However, this may have signaled the diminution of the financial means and not the idea. In 1984 Premier Lougheed addressed the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce pointing to the need for Alberta business to make itself as appealing and competitive as possible in the

²⁹ Jack Masson, "Provincial-Municipal Relations," in *Government and Politics in Alberta*, 179.

international marketplace.³⁰ The speech was a harbinger of the government's "white paper" on an industrial and science strategy—a hi-tech fix for an ailing economy—and reflected the government's determination to pursue the "third phase" dream.³¹ Thus while the government cut back many "soft services" outlays, it increased business development expenditures.³² While new trade offices were opened abroad and economic development departments added staff during the early 1980s, other departments were shedding staff.

Lougheed's efforts to stimulate the economy notwithstanding, by 1984 the sharp deflation of the real estate market, business failures, and assorted other calamities associated with a sorely ailing economy produced a crisis among Alberta's credit unions. The most spectacular failure of a financial institution came three years later with the collapse of the Principal Group, but as is evident from a special government inquiry into the failure, the Lougheed administration had known about the institution's serious problems for some time.³³ These failures placed additional burdens on the provincial treasury. More significantly, they revealed the true difficulty of establishing an independent financial industry that could bankroll made-in-Alberta ventures. Arguably it was the failure of these institutions that doused the waning province-building flame.

Whatever the effect of economic downturn and failed financial institutions, Peter Lougheed's departure from provincial politics was a body blow to his vision of an Alberta-led New West. Although the New West vision did not rest solely with Peter

³⁰ Lougheed, Peter. "Speech to Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Wednesday, 11 July 1984, Edmonton Convention Centre." General Collection. Alberta Legislative Library. Edmonton, Alberta.

³¹ See Alberta, *White Paper: Proposals for an Industrial and Science Strategy for Albertans, 1985-1990* (Edmonton: n.p., July 1984).

³² See Tupper et al., "The Role of Government," 49, for an analysis of government cutback expenditures.

³³ See William E. Code, *Final Report of the Inspector William E. Code Q.C.* (Edmonton: Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta, 18 July 1989).

Lougheed, he was its most powerful and articulate advocate. Lougheed's conviction that Alberta's abuse at the hands of central Canadian political and business powers required bold moves unquestionably propelled the vivification of the New West ideal.³⁴ With Lougheed's departure the pilot light of an expansive and impassioned province-building policy went out.

Writing in 1992, Tupper, Pratt, and Urquhart maintain that economic diversification and vitality remain basic political goals of the provincial Progressive Conservative government.³⁵ This is undoubtedly true. Premier Getty's administration targeted new moneys for tourism and forestry development. Forestry development, in particular, was aggressively promoted on a massive scale and the government made it known that it was open for foreign business in the area. As provincial cash was scarce, the government bankrolled forestry development with a combination of attractive leases, infrastructure development, debentures, tax holidays, and loan guarantees. Loan guarantees, in particular, became a favoured mechanism in the effort to stimulate development and attract business to the province. In time, this strategy became a never-ending political nightmare for the Getty government as one venture backed by guarantees after another failed.

At the same time that the government was promoting economic development, it introduced a multi-year retrenchment and restraint budget regime that was far more stringent than any under Peter Lougheed. As the distinction between retrenchment and restraint suggests, the government's stringent policy was not all of one piece. Funding for departments in broad budget categories such as environment, transportation and utilities,

³⁴ Richards and Pratt raise the possibility that the depression-era decline of the Lougheed family fortune significantly influenced key features of Peter Lougheed's personality, and his vision of an economically diversified West. See *Prairie Capitalism*, 155.

³⁵ Tupper et al., "The Role of Government," 38.

recreation and culture, and general government was slashed in Getty budgets.³⁶ These cuts followed on cuts made during the 1982–1985 period. Other areas fared better, but all were under a restraint regime. Social services expenditures burgeoned as the economic decline swelled social assistance rolls. Health expenditures also ballooned, in part because the government continued to construct rural hospital facilities to curry political favour in its hinterland base. However, in fairness, the government's health expenditures were part and parcel of the escalation of health costs in North American.

The Getty government's strict fiscal regime affected the morale and composition of the public service as officialdom became a target. Specific structural consequences will be discussed below; for the moment suffice it to note that in 1987 the government offered attractive retirement packages to its employees while at the same time implementing wage and hiring freezes to further reduce the size of the public service. These followed similar initiatives by the Lougheed government but are distinguished by their sweeping application as the government announced its intention to balance the books by the end of its first mandate. At the time research for this study was being conducted, the government's failure to make good on the budget balancing agenda had generated a public clamour for draconian cutbacks.

2.3. Centralized Control of Policy and Administration

Peter Lougheed and Don Getty differed significantly in their executive styles and interest in the machinery of government matters. Both Lougheed and Getty studied business administration at university but Lougheed had the more illustrious academic record, and assumed the premiership with a more rounded and successful business career. Lougheed, a graduate of the University of Alberta Law School and Harvard Business

³⁶ Ibid., 50.

School, served as a senior officer in the Mannix Corporation before moving on to a private law practice and politics. Richards and Pratt describe Lougheed's "managerial" style of government as having been "forged in the Mannix boardroom."³⁷ Despite his corporate background, Lougheed was not fixated on championing business administration as the ideal model for administering government.³⁸ What Lougheed's business training and experience provided was a commitment to, and understanding of, organizational innovation, strategic recruitment and positioning of executive personnel, systems, and planning.³⁹ Moreover, in terms of academic and corporate achievements, Lougheed arguably came to office as the Canadian first minister most qualified to initiate a

³⁷ Richards and Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism*, 164.

³⁸ Pratt and Tupper might take exception to this point, as they characterize the Progressive Conservative government after nearly a decade in office as comfortably operating in the same tradition that C. B. Macpherson ascribes to its UFA and Socred predecessors: "both parties conceived democracy in the image of a business system...in which shareholders are atomized, their voices reduced to proxies, and their effective rights redirected to the one right of receiving a dividend." See Larry Pratt and Allan Tupper, "The Politics of Accountability: Executive Discretion and Democratic Control," *Canadian Public Policy* 6 (1980): 264.

³⁹ Wood states that it is Lougheed's capacity to plan, as well as to study and organize, that sets him apart from others—See David Wood, *The Lougheed Legacy* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1985), 184. In an interview conducted for this dissertation former Lougheed advisory Ted Mills provided this cogent example of Lougheed's penchant for planning:

The first time that the members had to sit in the house was in spring of 1972...in the month or so leading up to that first sitting in the spring of 1972, we actually went into the legislative assembly and practiced. And what [Peter did was to divide the list of 49 members into] let us say 35 who he wanted to sit on the Government side and the other 14 who he wanted to sit on the Opposition side. And he said, "here are the five issues that are involved, so I want those 14 people to really come up with some tough questions. We had several practice sessions and the MLAs took it seriously...they really went at it. As a result by the time that the legislature did sit in the spring of 1972, all 49 of them who were on the government side knew what was expected of them and felt comfortable on the government side of the house. And Peter and nine others who had been in Opposition immediately prior to this election were the coaches in the practice session and they coached the guys on how to ask the questions and they would coach the guys on how to answer them. The idea was to avoid looking bad.

Ted Mills, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, June 19, 1991.

“planning and priorities” style of government.⁴⁰ This promoted wholesale revision of core policy processes and administrative structures.

Marsha and William Chandler write that innovations in governmental decision-making structures introduced during the late 1960s and 1970s focused on cabinet reform, beefing up centralized control and coordination machinery, ordering the policy-making process along rational lines, and overhauling the legislature and the bureaucracy.⁴¹ Lougheed touched on most of these—cabinet reform, developing a rational policy process, and restructuring the bureaucracy. He first considered and then rejected centralized control and coordination machinery of the type introduced at the federal level and in Ontario because he believed they placed inordinate power in the hands of appointed officials.⁴² Alberta’s Executive Council Office has never been heavily staffed although it certainly was important under the Tories. Despite pre-1971 campaign rhetoric the Tories never seriously sought to reform the Legislative Assembly, undoubtedly because the Tory caucus functioned largely as a legislature—albeit a secretive one.⁴³

Executive Council’s Role in the Policy Process

In the early 1970s Lougheed enlarged the size of the cabinet, created standing committees, and increased staff assistance.⁴⁴ On the matter of size, the first Lougheed

⁴⁰ Various labels could be used to describe the type of technocratic, policy-focused regimes that developed in the late 1960s and 1970s. I have chosen a label applied by Colin Campbell in his concluding essay in *Organizing Governance, Governing Organizations*. See Colin Campbell, “Conclusion,” 369–88. The choice is not entirely arbitrary, as Campbell’s conceptual scheme is used to frame the concluding remarks of this chapter.

⁴¹ See Marsha Chandler and William Chandler, *Public Policy and Provincial Politics* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1979), 97–148.

⁴² Ted Mills, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, June 19, 1991.

⁴³ For a discussion of the Tory Legislative Assembly see Fred Engelmann, “The Legislature,” in Tupper and Gibbins, *Government and Politics in Alberta*, 137–66.

⁴⁴ Chandler and Chandler, *Public Policy and Provincial Politics*, 101.

cabinet comprised 19 members including three Ministers without Portfolio.⁴⁵ By 1976 there were 24 members of cabinet, which grew to 29 following the 1979 election. After the 1982 election the number rose to 30, almost twice that of the Social Credit cabinet that was in place little more than 10 years before.⁴⁶

Don Getty campaigned in 1986 claiming that he would reduce the size of the cabinet. He was true to his word, as his post-election cabinet numbered 24. However, following the 1989 election Getty expanded the cabinet to 27—a number only marginally smaller than the largest Lougheed cabinet. At the time research for this study was conducted, Getty's "scaled-down" cabinet was the second largest provincial executive council in Canada.⁴⁷

Several factors contributed to the purposeful expansion of the Lougheed cabinets, and evidence that these remained in play during Getty's administration is underscored by the 1989 inflation of cabinet numbers. Requirements to balance regional interests played a part but this alone does not explain the size of Alberta cabinets. Lougheed's need to integrate a large back bench into the affairs of government and to provide additional compensation for government MLAs was undoubtedly a major factor.⁴⁸ However, of equal importance was his strong conviction that elected officials should dominate the policy process and actively oversee departmental administration. Getty, who learned his political craft while serving in Lougheed's governments, held the same view of

⁴⁵ Government of Alberta Telephone Directory (January 1972).

⁴⁶ Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1976, as cited in Chandler and Chandler, 99.

⁴⁷ See *Edmonton Journal*, "Provincial cabinet second-biggest in Canada," Sunday, October 27, 1991, A7. At the time the research was conducted, Alberta's cabinet was second only to that of Quebec in total numbers.

⁴⁸ Lougheed also spread the largesse around by appointing MLAs to boards and agencies, as there was extraordinary pressure to provide MLAs with compensation during the boom era. Even though the Tories would steadily raise MLA pay, perks, and compensation during the boom years, these did not keep pace with inflating prices and opportunities to make money outside politics.

politician-administrator relationships. His thinking is evident in this response to reporters when he was criticized for having an excessively large cabinet:

...if there are decisions to be made, if there are communications to be done, talking with the people, if it isn't elected people doing it, it's going to be appointed people or members of the public service. My preference has always been elected people.⁴⁹

The Lougheed Cabinet Committee Structure

Lougheed introduced a committee structure to cabinet, as there had been none under the Social Credit government.⁵⁰ Lougheed's new cabinet committees served as important elements in a policy development and refinement process, as they provided an opportunity to study, discuss, and digest policy matters that would eventually come before the full cabinet. Discussions focused on budget ramifications and needs, although it is certain that the political character of proposals received close scrutiny.⁵¹ The committees relieved the full cabinet from the crush of work that would accompany Lougheed's ambitious program of governance. The cabinet system therefore bolstered the government's capacity to plan.

The cabinet committee structure also tightened Lougheed's control over the policy process. First, and most significantly, it provided a mechanism that enabled the Tories to exert much greater control over the bureaucracy in policy-making matters. Membership on Lougheed's cabinet policy committees was reserved for politicians.⁵²

⁴⁹ *Edmonton Journal*, October 27, 1991, A7.

⁵⁰ Don Hamilton, former executive assistant to Premier Harry Strom, interview with author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, June 17, 1991.

⁵¹ Alberta Teachers' Association, *The 19th Legislature: A Users' Guide* (Edmonton, Alberta: ATA, n.d.), 16.

⁵² Early exceptions to this rule were made for the deputy provincial treasurer, the clerk of Executive Council, and later the deputy minister of the Executive Council, who sat on the Priorities Committee and also sat in on the full cabinet. These appointed officials appear to have been participants on the Priorities Committee. Senior officials other than A. F. Collins from the Treasury also sat on the

Exclusion of senior bureaucrats from cabinet policy committees reflected the premier's strong politics-administration dichotomy bias. Under Getty the exclusion policy was not only continued, but the deputy provincial treasurer was no longer invited to sit with the Priorities Committee.

Second, the cabinet committee structure necessitated the development of processes and machinery to control the form and flow of policy ideas. This was a natural development—the process had to be managed—but it also allowed for strategic management of the policy agenda by the centre.⁵³ This prospect did not escape Lougheed's attention. Ted Mills, former clerk of the cabinet, relates that Lougheed took considerable interest in the management of the Cabinet agenda:

When he was in town, which was most of the time, he and I met just about every evening before he went home during the last half an hour or so. Usually in my office, because I had on my wall a chart that identified all the potential cabinet agenda items that were coming up for the next six months. And we would look at the agenda for the next week's cabinet meeting together and Peter would say, "No, I do not want that one on the agenda until I have had an opportunity to talk to the minister. I have some information for him that he is not aware of so put that about two months down the line." And he would write a note to himself to remind the minister which he would probably do the next day. Or he would look at the agenda for a month from now and say, "that one I would like to give a lot of priority to so let's deal with it next week instead of next month."⁵⁴

Lougheed's Finance, Priorities and Coordination Committee (Priorities Committee) deserves special mention, as this is the cabinet committee dubbed "the Premier's committee." Its declared function has remained virtually the same since its inception at the beginning of the Lougheed administration—"to consider policies with

Treasury Board; however, their role was solely a consultative one. During the latter stages of the Lougheed administration, appointed officials sat in on the Energy and Agriculture and Rural Economy committees.

⁵³ This point is stated most forcefully by Laurent Dobuzinski in "Rational Policy-Making: Policy, Politics and Political Science," in *Apex of Power*, ed. T. A. Hockin (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1971), 227. According to Dobuzinski, "It appears that the primary motivation for some, if not all, of these reforms is not so much to make policy-making more rational as to deliberately redirect flows of information and thus to alter the power structure."

⁵⁴ Ted Mills, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, June 19, 1991.

respect to budgetary and taxation matters including the review and approval of program budgets for the government; to review all proposals having significant implications; to establish long-range directions and priorities of the government; to resolve interdepartmental differences at the ministerial level."⁵⁵ In Lougheed's mind the committee was analogous to an executive management committee of a corporate board of directors—the board being, in this case, the cabinet.

Premier Getty approached the committee in roughly the same fashion as Peter Lougheed—as a venue for vetting matters before they reached the full cabinet. However, there is a question whether the committee functioned in the same manner as the Lougheed body. The Getty Priorities Committee was not a collection of close confederates, as it so clearly was in the Lougheed era. During the Getty era the Priorities Committee seems to have been more the committee of the premier than the premier's committee. In practice this distinction is not subtle.

Although Getty tinkered with the committee system structure, in 1991 it had not been substantially changed in two decades.⁵⁶ Indeed, in certain areas Getty took

⁵⁵ Alberta Teachers' Association, *A Guide to Alberta's Twenty Second Legislature* (Edmonton, Alberta: ATA, n.d.), 23. The Treasury Board, which had been in existence since 1906, was subsumed under the committee; it subsequently regained its separate identity.

⁵⁶ Don Getty inherited a committee structure comprised of the following standing policy committees: Priorities, Finance and Coordination; Treasury Board; Economic Planning and Resource Development; Energy; Metropolitan Affairs; Rural Development; Social Planning. The present structure is composed of the following standing policy committees: Priorities, Finance and Coordination; Treasury Board; Social Planning; Economic Planning; Energy; Agriculture and Rural Economy; Tourism; Communications; Calgary/Edmonton Affairs. Alberta Teachers' Association, *A Guide to Alberta's Twenty Second Legislature*, 24. In addition to the standing policy committees of cabinet there are two other types of committees at the Executive Council level which deserve mention: standing operating committees and special committees of cabinet. Although the Treasury Board logically might be considered to be an operating committee, the Management Committee of Cabinet, the Legislative Review Committee, and the Communication committees are appropriately regarded as the operating committees of the Getty cabinet. The Management Committee was established during the first Lougheed administration at a time when the government was experiencing the initial pangs of rapid growth and considerable labour relations turmoil. Its present membership includes the deputy provincial treasurer, the public service commissioner, and the deputy minister of Executive Council and four ministers. During the Lougheed administrations the minister

Lougheed's innovations the next step. For example, he inserted backbenchers directly into political executive level policy making. Four backbenchers sat on cabinet committees between 1986 and 1989. After the 1989 election five backbenchers sat on committees. None of these MLAs sat on the Priorities Committee, but three of the five sat on the Agriculture and Rural Economy Committee—not surprisingly, these MLAs were from rural ridings. The two other MLAs sat on the Legislative Review Committee, which reviewed all proposed legislation to determine routing-for-approval procedures (RFAs) and ensured the completion of all relevant legal and policy assessments before introduction in the Legislative Assembly.⁵⁷

The Special Role Reserved for Backbenchers and the Tory Caucus

Placement of backbenchers on cabinet committees reflects a special consideration for these MLAs by Alberta's Tory premiers, and an important Alberta variation on Canadian executive level policy-making regimes. During the Lougheed and Getty administrations the Tory caucus was formally integrated into the policy-making process

responsible for personnel administration chaired the committee, but as Premier Getty did not favour this idea, the committee has been chaired in recent times by another minister. The Management Committee considers policy and broad operational questions relating to personnel and related matters. According to the most recent Alberta Teachers' Association legislative guide publication, its deliberations "include consideration of the budget ramifications of each proposal in relation to the need and desirability of the program and its problems of implementation." However, the function of the committee clearly goes beyond this, as it provides a venue in which to focus political and administration considerations on personnel policy and issues which are of concern to the government. Jim Dixon, the public service commissioner, speaks of the committee as being invaluable, providing him with a forum for exploring new policy initiatives and in so doing keeping him and the political executive onside. The Legislative Review Committee operates to "review all proposed legislation and to determine routing-for-approval procedure and to ensure that all relevant legal and policy assessments are undertaken prior to its introduction." Members of this committee review proposed legislation on a section by section basis to determine whether the draft reflects all the policy decisions that were made in the caucus and cabinet machinery concerning the proposed legislation. Such review can result in the committee turning legislation back to the legislative drafters for revisions, or where it appears that new ideas are contained within the draft bill, the committee will send it to appropriate committees for further consideration. As the chief legislative counsel states, "the Legislative Review Committee functions as the major quality control point at the political executive level for proposed legislation." Information is not available on the function of the Communications Committee. See Alberta Teachers' Association, *A Guide to Alberta's Twenty Second Legislature*.

⁵⁷ Alberta Teachers' Association, *A Guide to Alberta's Twenty Second Legislature*, 23.

through an elaborate caucus committee structure. Under Social Credit there had been a division between ministers and backbenchers. Lougheed was aware of this division and appears to have decided before forming the government that there was wisdom in using the talents and energies of caucus members. As Lougheed stated to Miller and Rourke in a 1989 interview:

In the parliamentary system you form the government because your members in the aggregate exceed in numbers those in the other parties. Too often I'd observed political leaders fall into the trap of what I call a cabinet-dominated caucus. So part of it developed...in the observation of Social Credit's caucus and the need to recognize that it was important to keep able people; to have a practice in which (not being a minister) would still stretch the abilities, capacity, intellectual challenges of the people involved.⁵⁸

Lougheed's integration of backbenchers into the policy process was both pragmatic and ideological. The ideological side came from a desire to have a government that appeared to represent the whole province—to provide "business government." The pragmatic aspect is evident in the above quote, but it should be added that a premier possessing a large majority runs a high risk of back bench dissatisfaction. This is certainly the case where there is a clear division between ministers and backbenchers.

Following the 1979 election, Lougheed moved to refine and strengthen the caucus machinery. Studying the operation of these committees in 1984, Peter McCormick describes these reforms in the following terms, "[the caucus committees] receive specific proposals or general policy ideas from government departments, and then frame an organized response in the form of recommendations to full caucus."⁵⁹ The full caucus passes items to committees with instructions to report back; legislative and policy proposals routed from the Executive Council Secretariat are considered, and the

⁵⁸ Robert Miller and Philip Rourke, "Interview with Peter Lougheed." *Parliamentary Government* 9, no. 1 (Fall 1989): 3.

⁵⁹ Peter McCormick, "Politics after the Landslide: The Progressive Conservative Caucus in Alberta," *Parliamentary Government* 4, no. 1 (1984), 9.

committees have a role in considering draft bills. Committees reported to full caucus on their meetings with those making representations to the government, and provided recommendations for action to relevant ministers and the full government caucus. A key feature of committee work was vetting ministerial proposals.

Don Getty reduced the caucus standing committee structure to five committees. In addition, he introduced two special permanent caucus committees—an Edmonton committee and a Calgary committee composed of area MLAs. The terms of reference of the standing committees specified the ministers with whom the committees would work. For example, the terms of reference of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs committee terms specified that the committee will “work closely with the Minister and Associate Minister of Agriculture and other Ministers which have policies and programs designed for rural Albertans.”⁶⁰ What was meant by working closely with the minister was not specified.

Peter McCormick’s study, which was conducted during the last Lougheed government, reveals sporadic ministerial attendance at caucus committees, even though regular attendance was implied in the committees’ terms of reference. However, according to McCormick, the relevant ministers attended committees when delegations were received. This practice appears to have continued in the Getty era.⁶¹ Accounts given to this researcher reveal that Getty’s ministers not only brought policy proposals before caucus committees, but also brought partially developed policy ideas to the relevant caucus committee for a political “litmus test.” Although this practice was informal, and one that not all ministers used, in cases where the minister was uncertain of the caucus reaction, or where the matter affected rural constituencies, the approach appears to have been prudent.

⁶⁰ “Government Caucus Committees,” October 4, 1989.

⁶¹ McCormick, “Politics after the Landslide,” 9.

It is important to add that Tory caucus committees traditionally have been populated by rural MLAs. The committees therefore exist as important forums for obtaining rural views on policy matters. Knowledgeable commentators note that during the Getty premiership a practice developed whereby caucus and cabinet committees met together to discuss certain proposals. This was especially the case when proposed legislation and matters of importance to the rural constituency were being considered. Not only was the practice more efficient than the practice of having separate meetings, but it reflected the increased influence of the rural back bench—especially after the 1989 election.

What is significant about the Alberta policy-making process is that it provides backbenchers with several access points where they have an opportunity to exert influence. The points include the minister, caucus committees, and full caucus. Backbenchers also have access through the departments—a point explored in greater detail in a following chapter. The Lougheed system was designed to facilitate backbencher access and by most accounts it achieved this. Under Don Getty's administration access increased in step with the importance of the Tories' rural members.

During the Getty administration the policy process became less well defined and its outcomes less predictable. The system's open structure fostered these unpredictable outcomes. Within such an open system policy proposals are subjected to considerable tugs and pushes as they wind their way through the system. The significant rural-urban cleavage within the Tory caucus amplified the dynamic. As intimated above, two caucuses exist within the larger Tory caucus—one rural and highly conservative, and the other more progressive and largely urban-oriented. These two camps reflect Hofstadter's

two faces of progressivism.⁶² Lougheed himself has spoken obliquely of an ideological cleavage within his caucuses, and during the Getty period the cleavage became decidedly more apparent.⁶³ With this division, and lesser ones existing along regional and political economic lines, friction is a natural byproduct.

Another reason why policy making became less predictable during the Getty premiership is that he did not have Lougheed's persona. McCormick writes of the system as the "Lougheed system," and leaves no doubt that it operated successfully on the strength of Peter Lougheed's unique talents and understandings. Indeed, given its inherent instability, such a system requires a strong leader who not only manages the process but also possesses such a reserve of power that the mere anticipation of the leader's actions maintains a degree of discipline among its participants. Don Getty did not actively manage the policy machinery with the energy of his predecessor, nor did he possess Lougheed's reserve of power. Therefore, the system transmogrified in some measure from one that served the first minister to one that held him hostage. And, even if Getty were not a hostage of the system, the result was that the caucus ceased to operate under the strong discipline of the premier. Equally important, the system made more demands on the leader than he was able to make on the system.

2.4. The Good Government Tradition

Alberta's history of long-tenured and majoritarian governments raises suspicions of a politicized public administration. The Tories were not above raising such a suspicion

⁶² See Larry Pratt and Allan Tupper, "The Politics of Accountability," 259–60, and Allan Tupper and G. Bruce Doern, "Alberta Budgeting in the Lougheed Era," in *Budgeting in the Provinces: Leadership and the Premiers*, ed. Allan M. Maslove (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1989), 131, for brief explorations of this point.

⁶³ See Robert Miller and Philip Rourke, "Interview with Peter Lougheed," *Parliamentary Government* 9, no. 1 (Fall 1989): 2–4.

when taking office in 1971, and it was perhaps for this reason that they replaced all Social Credit deputy ministers but one by the end of their first mandate. While Social Credit governments generally enjoyed a reputation for honesty, their personnel administration was not without blemishes. For example, writing in the early 1960s, the director of personnel related the following to the provincial treasurer about Social Credit personnel administration practices in the 1950s:

In the absence of proper standards and procedures for measuring ability, the weight of personal influence tended to dominate appointments and it frequently made itself felt, not only through the medium of the Ministers and MLAs, but also through departmental officials from Deputy Minister to those of much lower rank who knew how to pull the proper strings in order to help their friends and relatives who wanted to enter the provincial service. The fact of the matter was that, except in particular cases where proper qualifications and capability were clearly essential, there was little systematic or recognizable control over appointments, either by the Ministers or anyone else.⁶⁴

Moreover, while Alberta introduced sweeping changes to its personnel administration procedures in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, it abandoned its independent Public Service Commission in 1957. Hodgetts and Dwivedi view the development as one which "removed all traces of the fiction of an 'independent' central personnel agency."⁶⁵ However, these commentators' own quotation marks leave in doubt the matter of whether Alberta's innovation was necessarily a retreat from good government. As J. D. Love stresses, the existence of a Public Service Commission does not ensure that the merit principle is fully honoured.⁶⁶ Love's final observation in a

⁶⁴ Alvin Finkel, *The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 131.

⁶⁵ J. E. Hodgetts and O. P. Dwivedi, *Provincial Governments as Employers: A Survey of Public Personnel Administration in Canada's Provinces* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974), 19.

⁶⁶ J. D. Love, "The Merit Principle in the Provincial Governments of Atlantic Provinces," *Canadian Public Administration* 31, no. 1 (Fall 1988): 335-51.

survey of the historical development and contemporary practices of merit principle administration in the Atlantic provinces is pertinent:

If the provincial stories say anything, they say that the merit principle can be seriously eroded by procedural devices which may go beyond anything contemplated by the responsible legislature. With respect to all three of the maritime provinces, mention has been made of arrangements whereby ministers are provided with an opportunity to influence the final selection of candidates for office. There is no reference to these arrangements in any of the statutes concerned.⁶⁷

On the whole, Alberta's selection and promotion processes appear focused on placing the best available candidates in open positions. Union representation and established grievance procedures provide safeguards against merit principle abuses for bargaining unit positions. At the executive level the appointment process is elaborate and remains centrally controlled by the Personnel Administration Office (PAO). PAO's Executive Search Branch works closely with departmental human resource and line officials to define candidate requirements before advertising executive level positions. Upon receiving applications, Executive Search classifies applicants according to a tripartite scheme identifying candidates who meet all requirements for the position, those who meet most requirements, and those who fail to meet the standard. Normally, the competition drops applicants who do not meet all of the requirements.

It is normal protocol for Executive Search to conduct initial in-depth interviews with all the candidates chosen from the list by a Selection Committee comprising the candidate's eventual boss, a departmental personnel official, and a consultant from Executive Search. After this, the consultant provides the committee with a detailed report containing assessments of the candidates and recommendations on prospective position competition finalists. Armed with the consultant's recommendations, the Selection

⁶⁷ Ibid., 346.

Committee defines a short list of candidates who will be invited to appear before a final interview panel. The interview panel, comprising the Selection Committee and another executive official from the hiring department, subsequently interviews all short-listed candidates and makes a recommendation on the candidate of its choice. It is normal practice for the Executive Search consultant to chair the panel as well as to conduct reference checks. In the case of ADMs the committee makes its preferences known to the department's deputy minister, who makes the appointment.

Despite the formalism of the executive appointment process, there are opportunities for abuse. Putatively, establishing criteria for the initial "triage" is straightforward. However, as requirements are defined within the hiring department, the definition of suitable candidates is significantly determined by deputy ministerial preferences. Furthermore, it is the deputy minister who selects the successful candidate. It is on these points that the process shares the same weakness that Love identifies for appointments in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia—in the absence of institutional protection, the ability of the deputy minister to prevent a minister from interfering in the selection process depends primarily on the disposition of the minister and the relative strength of the deputy minister.⁶⁸

There is evidence that in Alberta the process is sometimes abused and ministers have their say in executive level appointments. More than one ADM interviewed stated they knew the minister had a hand in their selection. Indeed, more than one official commented that a minister either sat in on their selection committee or conducted a separate interview with finalists. Officials in a position to know privately volunteer that debate can occur over selection criteria and the central agency's triage judgments. Debate is expected. Perhaps resolution of the matter through negotiation between the central

⁶⁸ Ibid., 344, for New Brunswick.

personnel administration and the department is to be expected. Yet, the fact that negotiation takes place raises the prospect that political influence and suasion occur.

However, this must be kept in perspective. Ministerial intervention in ADM-level appointments appears to be rare and predominantly a matter of individual ministerial initiative. Most ministers refrain from direct involvement in the hiring process. Indeed, generally they seem to take little interest in ADM-level appointments. When ministers have involved themselves in ADM selections, accounts suggest that it has been more to veto candidates than to insist on the hiring of a specific individual. There is also evidence of ministerial intervention in seeking to have an ADM fired, transferred, or forced into early retirement.

Ministerial participation in ADM-level appointments raises the spectre of cronyism and patronage abuses. Their influence in firings, forced retirements, and transfers suggests further politicization at the ADM level. Interviews conducted with scores of ADMs failed to reveal wanton cronyism and patronage in selection and promotion practices, even though some interviewees suggested certain appointments were marked by political preference. To be sure, career officials and outsiders sympathetic to the government have been successful in position competitions. This appears to be true for appointments to positions dealing with matters of exceptionally high policy priority. On all these counts, the Alberta practice seems no different from that observed in other political jurisdictions which appoint “red and expert” officials to senior posts.⁶⁹ Red and expert officials—or “blue and expert” officials, as it necessarily would be in the Alberta circumstance—possess technical qualifications but are also demonstrably sympathetic to

⁶⁹ See Joel Aberbach and Bert Rockman, “Political and Bureaucratic Roles,” in *Organizing Governance, Governing Organizations*, ed. Colin Campbell, and B. Guy Peters (Pittsburgh, PA.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), 82.

the declared purposes and ideological orientation of the government.⁷⁰ However, generally, even though preferences for "blue and expert" officials are evident in certain appointments, the prevalent pattern is to hire technically competent and ideologically anonymous executives.⁷¹

A necessary condition for ministerial intrusion into personnel matters involving ADMs is deputy minister acquiescence. Alberta deputies do not possess great reserves of independent power that permit them to stand up to a minister determined to intervene in such matters. By some accounts this was especially true during the Getty administration, as the premier left departmental matters largely to his ministers, and deputies were very much under ministerial supervision. Lougheed viewed deputy ministerial appointments as being one of his special preserves. Therefore, although deputy ministers always reported directly to their ministers during the Lougheed era, they enjoyed a measure of independence since they had opportunities to make representations to the deputy minister of Executive Council.

In summary, the Alberta merit system appears to be open to the same abuses as noted by students of other provincial personnel administration systems, although perhaps the abuses have not been as flagrant. Alberta's progressivist heritage undoubtedly prevented a spoils system tradition from developing, even though there is evidence of politically motivated appointments in the Social Credit administrations. More recent

⁷⁰ See "Concluding Observations" in C. Bojchko, "Lougheed's 'Energetic' Bureaucrats," Master's thesis, Department of Political Science, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta (Fall 1982), 104-108.

⁷¹ This researcher did not systematically inquire into the extent to which ministers intervened directly or through their deputies in shifting, firing, or pressuring ADMs into early retirements. A few ADMs interviewed spoke personally of a retirement or transfer resulting from ministerial displeasure. Others spoke from hearsay but could not name names. In all these accounts it was not always clear whether the deputy shared the minister's view of the official. Moreover, the friction between minister and official most often was described as one that revolved around a minister's assessment of an official's competence, or around a personality clash.

evidence concerning ADM-level appointments points to the liberties that politicians can take, but ministerial interventions do not seem to be pervasive—perhaps this, too, is testimony to the progressivist tradition of Alberta public administration. In other words, what is particularly noteworthy is how the Tories have generally disciplined themselves to shun patronage appointments in the merit system ranks.⁷²

2.5. The Growth and Decline of Tory Bureaucracy

The public service of the last Social Credit government is characterized by rapid growth and modest structural experimentation. During this period the service was being cautiously transformed to provide the administration demanded of the government of a socially and economically dynamic province. With this point understood, what is so striking about the structural changes made in the Social Credit bureaucracy is their timidity considering the changes being wrought in the larger society, and their failure to embrace structural reform models found in many governments at that time. The organization of the government in 1971 was little different from that of a decade before, which reflected an organizational structure developed many years prior to 1960. A similar observation applies to the internal organization of departments. For the most part, the officials who reported to Social Credit deputy ministers were program managers. As a result, most deputy ministers had broad spans of control, with a dozen or more program managers reporting to them. Growth was accommodated structurally by expanding the number of personnel in each level of departmental hierarchies. In short, the structures absorbed personnel as sponges absorb water. The creation of new departments began only during the last years of the Social Credit administration.

⁷² During the Lougheed and Getty premierships the press found occasion to cry foul over patronage appointments but closer examination reveals that almost all cases involved Order-in-Council (OIC) postings. Indeed, Tory governments have been inventive in developing special reporting relationships so that the OIC pedigrees of controversial appointments would be evident.

The Lougheed Tories brought to office a very different notion of organizing government. The most significant bureaucratic innovations during the first three Lougheed governments were the management classification and compensation system that created an executive management cadre and the accompanying wholesale reorganization of internal departmental structures into divisions headed by executive officers.

The first step taken in creating the new executive cohort was to introduce the Public Service Management Pension Plan (PSMPP)—a plan which was separate from the Public Service Pension Plan. The purpose of the new plan was announced by the minister of the day to provide:

special coverage for the senior employees of the government who are excluded from the bargaining unit by reason of managerial and/or contract status. It includes provision for an earlier and more flexible retirement age, and an ability to transfer pension benefits and service from any other government and/or industry.⁷³

The minister added, "This plan, I believe, offers more options to the government in attracting top executives to the public service."⁷⁴ Public Service Commissioner Keith Robertson echoed the minister's evaluation of the plan in his 1972 Annual Report, stating that passage of the pension plan is "a major component of a completely new system for the management group additional steps of which we are planning for introduction in 1973."⁷⁵

⁷³ *Alberta Hansard*, May 16, 1972, 55-22.

⁷⁴ The government was apparently interested in attracting executives from the private sector to the Alberta Public Service and therefore provided opportunity in the new plan for a transfer of pension benefits; however, according to J. E. Dixon, the current public service commissioner and long-time Personnel Administration Office employee, this expectation was not wholly fulfilled. Buying back their shares of pension plans to facilitate the transfer of pensions proved to be prohibitively expensive for most private sector executives. J. E. Dixon, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, November 27, 1991.

⁷⁵ *Alberta, Annual Report of the Public Service Commission: For the Year Ended December 31, 1973*. (Edmonton: Public Service Commission, 1974), i.

The other principal component of Robertson's "new system" was a radically different management compensation and pay plan. The Public Service Commissioner writes in his 1973 Annual Report that the new classification and pay plan was his organization's major achievement of the year. He would go on to write that The Management Classification and Pay Plan represents:

a major component in a comprehensive program being designed and implemented to recognize the 1,350 managers within the public service as a group with unique responsibilities and accountability.... The new Plan enabled us to accommodate, without cost, all designated managerial positions, assigned to some 360 classes, in a simplified classification scheme with 48 classes in four levels.⁷⁶

The four new levels were Executive Officer I and II and Senior Officer I and II.⁷⁷ The Executive Officer II position was the highest executive level and, with few exceptions, was reserved for senior ADM personnel. ADMs were also classified at the Executive Officer I level, as were executive directors reporting directly to the minister or to EO II level ADMs.⁷⁸

Introduction of the pension, compensation, and pay plans was a necessary precondition to establishing an executive cadre. The appearance and growth of the ADM cohort effectively dates from these early Lougheed-era innovations. Although in the

⁷⁶ Alberta, *Annual Report of the Public Service Commission: For the Year Ended December 31, 1973*. (Edmonton: Public Service Commission, 1974), 3.

⁷⁷ In recent years the Executive Officer classes have been renamed Executive Manager to provide a modern sheen to the nomenclature. It should also be noted that the current Management Classification Plan contains a fifth class—Senior Assistant. Alberta, Personnel Administration Office Document PMP-11-2 (1988), 18.

⁷⁸ In 1984 the government reviewed the Management Classification Plan and recommended several changes that were approved by the Cabinet in 1986. Some of the 1986 changes were cosmetic. For example, the Executive Officer classification titles were renamed Executive Manager to reflect the administration's interest in stressing the importance of management in the public service. Changes to the Senior Officer nomenclature were less transparent, with SO I (A, B, C) classifications becoming, respectively, Manager I II, III. Senior Officer II (A, B, C) classifications were converted to Senior Manager I, II, III classifications. The Public Service Commissioner reported that the main intent of the cabinet changes was to consolidate and simplify the Classification Plan. At the Executive Manager level simplification was achieved as all classifications according to occupation were eliminated.

1960s a few senior officials had carried the title of ADM, this did not identify them as having a specific set of duties and responsibilities. When the Tories took office there were only three officials holding ADM titles. The number quickly grew, for as early as 1972 Lougheed began to organize departments along divisional lines headed by assistant deputy ministers and executive directors. This was first evident in the Treasury, where two assistant deputy provincial treasurer positions were created. Shortly afterwards ADMs would head up the three new divisional lines of a restructured Department of Agriculture. In the same year the revamped Industry and Commerce Department was organized around ADM lead divisions. There were 17 assistant deputy ministers in 1973 and 23 in 1974. A year later, departments organized along divisional lines included Agriculture; Treasury; Commerce and Industry; Advanced Education; Culture, Youth and Recreation; Environment, Manpower and Labour; Mines and Minerals; Highways and Transportation; and Telephones and Utilities. The group included all the new ministries and the bulk of those that had been reorganized by the Tories. With Lougheed's sweeping 1975 governmental reorganization, the logic of divisional organization with the lines headed by bureaucrats at the executive officer level was applied throughout the government. Few program managers—that is, non-executive-level officials with discrete and singular program responsibilities—reported to deputy ministers after the 1975 reorganization. Moreover, those who did invariably were the heads of administrative and operational support organizations, or headed special projects. A measure of the extensiveness of this change is that the number of ADMs expanded from 23 in 1974 to 48 in 1976.

One result of these innovations was a dramatic reduction in the number of program managers reporting to deputy ministers, which relieved deputy ministers from burdensome program administration. So freed, they could pay more attention to the

requirements of Lougheed's energetic government. By narrowing the deputies' spans of control and increasing the number of departmental layers, the new administration developed a structure through which greater control and coordination could be exercised over the public service. This structure made it possible to channel more energy into the government, as the new ADM and executive director cadres had administrative leadership responsibilities written into their job descriptions. An added bonus accruing to the Lougheed government was the opportunity to bring new talent to the top of the province's public administration. In part, this was achieved by quickly retiring most of the deputy ministers of the old Social Credit government. It was also achieved by filling the many new high-paying and prestigious executive positions with the brightest within the administration—and this often meant promoting persons within the bureaucracy over others in higher positions—as well as actively recruiting from outside the provincial public service.

As a result of the addition of new functions and lines, the number of deputy minister reporting relations grew from the 1972 figure of 131 to 221 in 1981.⁷⁹ The span of control in these last boom years rose from 6.5 in 1976 to 7.1 in 1981. In sum, throughout the boom years the layers and expanse of the public service's executive and managerial echelons grew. It should be added that the deputy span of control statistics significantly understate the expansion of the organizational structure. Deputy spans of control were growing at the same time as layers were being added to departmental structures and ADM spans of control were ballooning. In effect, the increase in the deputy ministerial spans of control represented the tip of the iceberg. Indeed, the

⁷⁹ Both the 1972 and 1981 figures include managerial and senior staff officials reporting to chief deputy ministers and their deputy ministers, deputy ministers, associate deputy ministers with direct reporting relationships to ministers, and managing directors heading separate organizational entities with direct reporting relationships to ministers.

hierarchy of the boom-time Tory public service would have been even more exaggerated if it had not been for the purposeful expansion of the number of departments and ministers.

In marked contrast to Harry Strom's Social Credit bureaucracy, Lougheed's public service was highly centralized and hierarchical; that is, decision making was concentrated at the top (centralized) with top decision makers governing effectively from the top (hierarchical). A good measure of the centralization and hierarchy can be traced directly to the premier, who is said to have possessed extraordinary energy and a highly developed understanding of the particulars of government. Moreover, his strength was greatly bolstered because he was surrounded by a loyal group of individuals who not only offered political and personal support but also held the same ideas and aspirations for the government.

The economic decline occurring between 1982 and 1985 does not appear to have affected the Lougheed government's preference for centralization and hierarchy. However, large numbers of positions created by the Tory administration over the previous decade were excised. The structural consequence of this action was to simplify organizational structures—growth years experiments were largely abandoned, leading to the disappearance of the superministries and their chief deputy ministers.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ An apparent paradox exists in the Lougheed government's creation of several superministries, as the construction of these structures appears to go against the grain of the Tory preference for a high level of political oversight. However, a closer examination of the structure reveals that in the case of Energy and Natural Resources, two ministers were given control over the amalgamated structure: the minister of Energy and Natural Resources and an associate minister who was responsible for public lands between 1975 and 1979, and in the next legislature responsible for public lands and wildlife. The line of responsibility between the associate minister and the deputy minister of Renewable Resources was direct, even though the deputy minister reported administratively to the chief deputy minister of Energy and Natural Resources. In addition to the two ministers who provided political oversight, a member of the caucus was given responsibility for overseeing the Syncrude Equity Division, which was headed for a time by an assistant deputy minister reporting directly to the chief deputy minister. Later, the Syncrude Equity organization would be headed by a chair appointed by an Order in Council, who reported directly to the minister.

When the price of petroleum dropped precipitously in 1986, the new Getty government pressed to further reduce departmental staff complements. During 1986 and 1987, for the first time, the number of executive-level officials began to drop significantly. This can be viewed as part of a "double-action" process during the 1980s, wherein the ADM cohort actually increased up to 1985 as a result of departments being consolidated and executive positions not being reduced. The executive officer positions were apparently still valued as key components in leading and controlling the lines of the bureaucracy. These positions existed as important structural "scaffolding" for the downsizing work in progress. Moreover, up to 1985 the government possessed the vestige of its historical mission and therefore executive managerial leadership was required to exhort the public service to do more with less.

Cuts to the executive management cadre initiated by the Getty administration reflected, in part, the next logical stage of deconstructing the Lougheed bureaucracy, for as the size of the bureaucracy was diminished, the rationale for many executive managerial positions was reduced. However, it can also be argued that many such positions were not needed because Premier Getty brought to office a different, less

Control over the Department of Transportation was somewhat different. The 1975 reorganization was effected by placing the bulk of the old department of Highways and Transport under the deputy minister of Construction, who reported to a new chief deputy minister. A second deputy minister (Policy Development) was added to the structure and this official had two ADMs (Urban Services and General/Transportation Services) and the director of a policy and planning secretariat reporting to him. What is significant is not so much the organizational array as the personnel who populated the top ranks of the structure. The new chief deputy was R. A. McFarlane, the former deputy minister of Industry and Commerce, who was appointed shortly after the government came to power and someone who clearly enjoyed the confidence of the administration. The deputy minister of Policy Development was E. M. Mills, a man of considerable talents who worked closely with Peter Lougheed in the Tories' drive to power as a senior party official, and who served as secretary to the cabinet and later was chiefly responsible for organizing the Alberta Energy Corporation before assuming the deputy minister position. C. D. Radke, a career public servant acting as a ministerial executive assistant facilitating liaison between the Transportation department and minister Hugh Horner, assumed the directorship of the Planning Secretariat. In 1977 Radke became the chair of the Motor Transport Board, and by 1979 this board and its chair would be moved into a direct reporting relationship with the chief deputy minister. Ken Kowalski, another Horner ministerial assistant, became the chair of Regional Transportation Services in 1977 and in this capacity oversaw an initiative aimed at decentralizing the department.

activist view of government which simply did not require the same amount of executive managerial machinery to get the job done. ADMs who remained were given responsibility for branches, shorn of their ADMs and executive directors, which existed under the older organizational order. Some downsizing occurring within extant divisions resulted in the elimination of executive director (tier-three) positions. The consequence of these reorganizations was to add to ADM responsibilities and to increase the number of personnel reporting to ADMs.

A strong case can be made that during the Getty years the governmental structure became less centralized and less hierarchical. Getty's preference that ministers shoulder the burden for operating their departments undoubtedly contributed to more decentralized decision making and policy making. Similarly, his apparent lack of interest in acquiring the knowledge about the numerous details of policy and administration that characterized Peter Lougheed also seems to have promoted decentralization and less hierarchy. By 1989 ADMs and other executives would see the numbers of staff reporting to them increase. This increase presumably resulted in less hierarchy, inasmuch as it made it more difficult for officials to exercise discrete control over their subordinates; that is, executives with more subordinates reporting to them are less likely to be able to exercise the same measure of control unless the requirements of control are simplified or the executives are given tools that facilitate their capacity to control.

Nevertheless, even though the control of the policy agenda within the Getty government was less centralized than under Lougheed, central financial control was increased. Indeed, it could be argued that through increased centralized financial control, hierarchical control over the policy agenda was increased. What was shifted was the locus of hierarchy. While the Treasury Board and the Treasury Department had always been responsible for the budget and financial management of the government during the

Lougheed administration, Treasury's control of spending and control over the viability of proposed programs and initiatives increased markedly as the critical goal of the government became that of economizing operations. Many senior officials interviewed for this study volunteered that Provincial Treasurer Dick Johnston exercised more control over their administrative lives than the premier, and that in formulating policy proposals they were especially aware of the need to consult with and win the favour of the Treasury Department. It is possible that this dynamic simplified the criteria for sound management and thus served to counter the decentralizing effect of broader spans of control. After all, the commonly made suggestion that flattening the hierarchy results in decentralized decision making is made with the proviso that all things are equal.⁸¹ Where the government's over-arching administrative priority becomes largely one of promoting economies in operations, the capacity of executives to manage a larger group of subordinates is enhanced.

2.6. Perspective and Conclusion

The 1921 victory of the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) ended the competitive two-party system that has yet to return with permanence to the legislature. The UFA's victory also brought to the Legislative Assembly an amalgam of grass roots and progressivist democracy which promoted radical reformist ideas such as direct legislation through referendums, recall of public officials, proportional representation, nonpartisanship, and "business government." The pull of traditional parliamentary government transformed the UFA administration into something more timid, and precipitated its Depression-era defeat at the hands of William Aberhart's Social Credit

⁸¹ See B. Guy Peters, "The Machinery of Government: Concepts and Issues," in *Organizing Governance, Governing Organizations*, ed. Colin Campbell and B. Guy Peters (Pittsburgh, PA.: University of Pittsburgh Press), 34.

movement. Aberhart promised to reinstate a radical democratic vision but very shortly abandoned his radical prescription while embracing familiar forms of cabinet government organization. Over time, Social Credit transformed itself from a truly radical political movement to an arch-conservative government, although it did not lose its populist bent.

If Hofstadter's observations about progressivism are correct, Social Credit's radical-to-conservative transformation was not out of character with other progressivist-populist movements. Indeed, while Peter Lougheed came to power with a political agenda and approach to governance which differed markedly from that of the Social Credit administrations of Ernest Manning and Harry Strom, Lougheed's ideas about the limits of state intervention were not inconsistent with the activist tradition of progressivist and populist government.

The political legacy of these two prairie revolts was a quasi-party system that despite signs of significant erosion continues to operate. Features of this regime, solidly in place by the mid-1940s, include a strong leader, policy making concentrated in the executive, a quiescent caucus, and a structurally and politically weak legislature. This is not to suggest that Alberta political history has been devoid of change—the leitmotif of this chapter is one of change—it is to suggest that the character of relationships among the principal institutions remain fundamentally defined by their historical antecedents.

Peter Lougheed was especially wedded to the progressivist notion of a politics-administration dichotomy, and his efforts to divide politics and administration were often extreme. He rotated ministers every four years so that, among other things, their departments would not “capture” them. He also moved ministers to ensure they did not go “stale” and, one suspects, to subtly underscore his prominence within the government. Lougheed eschewed matching ministers and departments with reference to the politicians' professional qualifications for fear that their political judgment would be

confounded. He banned senior public servants from sitting in on cabinet-level committees, kept the Executive Council Secretariat small, constructed a large cabinet to increase his government's ability to oversee the public service, and even prohibited anything resembling deputy minister "mirror committees" of the sort that existed in the federal government. More conventionally, Lougheed gave his cabinet and caucus important policy processing responsibilities that, in part, were intended to keep the bureaucracy under control.

Premier Getty relaxed many of the prohibitions even if there was less bureaucratic representation at the cabinet table. The numbers of deputy minister committees and appearances of public servants before the caucus committee were increasing as data were being collected for this study. Several of Getty's ministers had held the same cabinet portfolios for several years. Thus, while the separation between politicians and administrators remained, and politicians continued to have considerable influence over the bureaucrats, the institutional bases constructed to separate the domains atrophied under Getty.

Both Lougheed's and Getty's efforts to separate politics and administration appear to have been motivated by a desire to have politicians control the apparatus of government. Undoubtedly there was a philosophical component in this orientation, but above all there were pragmatic considerations relating to exerting political control over the bureaucracy. This is why the rules of the merit principle were violated on occasion. Some of the most obvious breeches with ADMs have been when the government's policy agenda required administrative personnel who could speak with political authority.

Stretching the rules most frequently occurs when ministers have an indirect role in ADM appointments. Where ministers have a say in the selection of ADMs there is a suspicion that political criteria are applied. Presumably they are. Given what is known of

selection practices in Western parliamentary democracies, this politicization is not unusual. Arguably, it is functional, as it creates a higher public service that is not at loggerheads with the political executive. However, it becomes dysfunctional when expertise is consistently sacrificed for political allegiance. The neutrality of the public service becomes suspect in the public's mind, and the public service loses the ability to speak frankly in camera to the minister and government about the commonweal interest.

With very few exceptions, Alberta's ADMs come to their positions highly trained and experienced in their work. Expertise is not sacrificed. Nevertheless, exposés of patronage and politicization periodically reach the front pages of the province's major newspapers. The subtle distinctions between OIC and merit appointments are obscured in these accounts, and presumably are entirely missed by the general public. The image of public service neutrality held by opposition members and the public has not been helped by Tory secretiveness and the closed manner in which the government operated under Lougheed and Getty. Indeed, as will be detailed in chapter 5, ADMs are under orders to channel routine inquiries made by opposition members to the minister's office. The tradition of ministerial responsibility makes such action defensible, but suspicions arise concerning the neutrality of the public service, as the opposition knows that government MLAs have open access to higher officialdom, subject to protocols.

The central argument of Cynthia Bojeckho's thesis on Lougheed's higher public administration is that he created an especially compliant public service. Bojeckho's analysis is open to criticism—she misses the possibility that the Lougheed senior executive service was genuinely enthused by the "Alberta First" policy agenda—but even at this her assertion is close to the mark. Undoubtedly, hiring "blue and expert" officials was a factor. Fear for career also weighs in the equation, as ministers are free to veto appointments and have in some instances spoiled an ADM's career.

Other factors contribute to the bureaucracy's tractability. Massive Tory electoral victories allowed them the luxury of claiming to speak for the public interest—a claim backstopped by the “business government” prejudice of the political culture. The powerful cabinet and caucus structures shift knowledge to the political executive as well as increase access of outside interests to the political echelons. Indeed, the caucus committee system was designed specifically to promote such access. In certain types of transactions the public service finds itself sidestepped. The same side-stepping arguably occurs as a result of corporatist relationships that have developed between the Tory government and selected business interests.⁸² A numerically weak opposition and institutionally weak legislature deprive the bureaucracy of allies and defenders in the Assembly.

Finally, the absence of a strong public administration tradition in Alberta government contributes to the servitude. Person-to-position and open recruitment practices at all levels of the hierarchy, and low status and relatively low pay at the executive ranks, make public service something other than a career pursuit for many in Canadian government administration. This seems to be especially the case in Alberta, where business and entrepreneurship are highly regarded. Moreover, government service is generally viewed without idealism. During boom years, there was a coming and going of officialdom as persons with an entrepreneurial bent left the government to seek fortunes in the private sector. Although this pattern lessened following the recession, its effect was to rend the tradition of a smooth career succession into the higher ranks of the public service.

⁸² This point is taken up in greater detail in chapter 5. For a formulation, see William D. Coleman and Grace Skogstad, “Policy Communities and Policy Networks: Chapter One,” in *Policy Communities and Public Policy in Canada*, ed. William D. Coleman and Grace Skogstad (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991), 14–31.

Lougheed's organization of the executive can be viewed as institution and tradition building; however, the act deconstructed and deinstitutionalized important elements of the bureaucratic culture that existed up to the time. The economic boom followed by stagnation and decline placed the public service under constant reorganization. This did little institutionally to strengthen the public service or the administrative executive. Moreover, as previously mentioned, prohibitions against deputy minister level committees, and the absence of elaborate bureaucratic machinery to coordinate the work of the numerous departments, meant that departments operated separately for many years. Only when a shrinking treasury necessitated cutbacks and streamlining did the government encourage the public service to improve coordination, move personnel across departmental boundaries, and institute a uniform program of executive training. However, with many senior officials being pensioned, and the service being truncated, officials were forced to collaborate with one another while scrambling to protect their turf and their very jobs from the efficiencies and redundancies resulting from collaboration. On the one hand, this process undoubtedly has contributed to enhancing a collective public administration ethos. On the other hand, the undertow of competitiveness and the apparent lack of concern on the part of the political executive over the state of public administration has not. In sum, Alberta higher public administration is not a collective institutional force. Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising to find the public service under the thumb of the political leadership.

There is a time in the natural history of all systems when something akin to "harmony" is achieved. All elements of the system are in balance complementing one another, and are responsive to the external environment. The year that the Tories came closest to such a harmonious state was 1981. Peter Lougheed, with his massive legislative majority, would be able to realize another in an election the following year. The Social

Credit party was all but moribund and would not be represented in the Assembly after 1982. Nineteen eighty-one was the last year of the boom. From this apogee of harmony, the genius of the Lougheed policy-making regime would diminish.

Although Premier Getty tinkered with the machine, it fundamentally remained the one which he inherited. However, Getty governed during a very different time. The elegant system, so well suited to 1981 and built to effect the vision of a new West, remained largely unreconstructed and thus strained. Lougheed's inclusion of his whole caucus in the policy-making process was possible largely owing to his vision of a new Alberta, his intellectual reach, the power he possessed as resurrector of the moribund provincial Conservative party, and his almost boundless energy. In the absence of Lougheed's personal power, energy, and genius, the system became increasingly unwieldy and, like a great atrophying empire, fell slowly in upon itself. For senior public administrators this meant that the certainty with which policy was forged and executed became increasingly clouded, the locus of power increasingly blurred, and goals increasingly obfuscated.

In the latter years of the Getty premiership a new certainty based in fiscal crisis emerged. Public administration ceased to be the buoyant product of a juggernaut government as the lifeboat ethics of cutback administration permeated every facet of practice. Within the public service, an executive leadership prepared to cut deeply and to consider this as the essential element of the job description. Elements of the policy-making machine that were so perfectly aligned a decade before were no longer of one piece. The old harmony of powerful leader, compliant caucus, weak legislature, and massive public mandate had been broken. Even the public service appeared less dutiful as

its members underwent the pain of retrenchment.⁸³ This was the environment within which the assistant deputy ministers surveyed and interviewed for this study were operating.

⁸³ That this might be the case is made by Aberbach and his compatriots: "Taken together, traditional collective cabinet responsibility, cohesive and disciplined parties, a relatively integrated executive, party government, and especially a party-centered parliament, reduce the propensity for bureaucrats to develop intense contacts outside the administrative system. This is so because in such circumstances external actors can bring little independent leverage to bear in bargaining relations. By contrast, structural fragmentation disperses power to a wide array of actors and increase the interdependence of bureaucrats and parliamentary politicians." Joel D. Aberbach, Robert D. Putnam, and Bert A. Rockman, *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 228-29.

CHAPTER 3

A CONSTRUCT OF ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER WORK

3.0. Introduction

This chapter develops a construct for examining work at the ADM level. This construct provides a basis for systematically testing hunches and hypotheses as well as identifying a number of factors that may promote variations in ADM level work. Testing is discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

The construct is a composite cobbled from five bodies of evidence. The first evidence considered is the Alberta Personnel Administration Office "Executive Profile" and job classification descriptions for Executive Manager I (EM I) and Executive Manager II (EM II) officials.¹ The "Executive Profile" defines requisite skills that apply to all classifications at the executive level. Job descriptions sketch out skills and responsibilities that are distinguished by the executive management classification. If certain testable assumptions are introduced, the EM II/EM I distinctions found in the job descriptions can serve as bases for postulating differences between Alberta ADMs and their executive management subordinates.²

¹ Alberta Personnel Administration Office, "Executive Profile" [undated mimeo.] and "Management Job Descriptions" [undated mimeo.].

² Effectively, all EM IIs are operationally classified as ADMs. Therefore, attributes appearing in EM II job descriptions are assumed to be those of ADMs. Attributes declared for EM Is are assumed to be those of executive managers reporting to ADMs. Obviously, these assumptions do not account for EM Is operationally defined as ADMs. No less than sixteen EM I officials carry the ADM title. More importantly, given the operational definition of ADM adopted for this study, the numbers of EM Is who are considered to be ADMs rises to 62. Logic recommends that the PAO descriptions be taken at face value: EM Is performing in ADM roles are EM Is all the same. Within the ADM ranks there are therefore differences in the essential character of work defined by the executive manager classification. However, if EM I ADMs do not perform certain unique EM II responsibilities that are essential to organizational operation: it would

The Alberta job descriptions and the "Executive Profile" are of special significance to this study, as they are the only evidence that speaks directly to executive management practice in the Government of Alberta. Thus they provide the firmest foundations on which to build testable propositions for a construct of Alberta ADM work. The merits of reviewing other literature extend beyond overcoming the limitations of the Personnel Administration Office (PAO) descriptions. The larger literature provides a basis for developing alternative conceptions of ADM work, and captures a multitude of nuances.

A second body of evidence is derived from a Treasury Board Secretariat/Public Service Commission profile of Canadian federal supervisory and management officials.³ It identifies five levels within the federal government management stream, from supervisors to assistant deputy ministers, and claims to identify "core characteristics that define effective performance, characteristics that transcend specific functions, trends and preferred leadership styles of the day."⁴ This profile is the only published Canadian documentation of key performance characteristics of ADM level officials. Unfortunately, as a consequence of its ardent leadership and management bias, the federal profile largely ignores the aspects of higher public management dealing with policy administration and system-wide liaison that figure so prominently in the public administration literature.⁵

be necessary for deputy ministers to assume them. This prospect seems less likely than that of EM Is taking selected functions nominally reserved for EM IIs. This logic directs that the EM II prescription be conditionally applied to EM I officials who are operationally defined as ADMs. The facts will be tested in chapter 4.

³ Canada, Treasury Board Secretariat/Public Service Commission, "Profile of Public Service Leaders and Managers," (Ottawa: Treasury Board Secretariat, 1990).

⁴ Ibid., 1.

⁵ Donald Savoie states in his recent *The Politics of Public Spending in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 24: "Senior officials in Ottawa with 'good instincts' for dealing with political situations are in great demand, and the prime minister on the advice of the Privy Council will often ensure that they are appointed to departments with junior or weak ministers. The importance attached to their capacity to advise ministers and cabinet on politically difficult situations is illustrated by a

A third body of evidence is extracted from the deputy ministerial literature, which is relevant in that declarations of deputy ministers provide important clues to the assistant deputy minister's function and activities. Since periodic references to ADMs and other subordinate executive level officials appear in this literature, a perusal of these passages provides clues as to the particulars of the ADM job.

The deputy ministerial literature is also germane insofar as the ADM position can be defined as being truly that of an *assistant* deputy minister. According to one deputy interviewed for this survey, the ADM title denotes that the official operates within the realm of the Minister's office in that "minister" is in the title. This view has the ADM functioning as a *petit* deputy, or as a "slice" of the deputy position. There is an historical justification for viewing the Alberta ADM in these terms, since ADM positions developed to lighten the burden that the Lougheed government increasingly placed on its deputies. If this *petit* deputy notion is valid, then an understanding of the deputy's job is arguably one of the surest ways to understand the ADM position.

These three sources promise a reasonable basis from which to construct suppositions about the role and principal activities of the ADM. However, it is also necessary to consult the broader public administration literature that addresses tasks and functions of higher civil servants, as well as the literature that addresses the role of the general manager. Attention to these writings is desirable because the descriptions, profiles, and deputy literature fall short of providing a fully satisfactory basis for developing a construct. These writings also provide additional insights and a fuller picture of executive level functions and tasks.⁶

presentation on how to manage political crises made by the deputy minister of Fisheries to a one-day meeting of assistant deputy ministers held in Ottawa."

⁶ Strictly speaking, these distinctions between EM IIs and EM Is are not the same as those existing between ADMs and their third tier subordinates, since a sizable proportion of operationally defined ADMs are EM Is. However, for the purposes of this study the jobs operationally defined as ADMs are presumed

3.1. Public Service Executive Roles, Functions, and Tasks: Perspectives from the Literature

Alberta Personnel Administration Office Executive Officer Profile and Job Descriptions

Four major areas of management skills are identified in the "Executive Profile": leadership/personal skills, decision-making skills, administrative skills, and communication skills. Among the leadership/personal skills are leadership, staff development, negotiation, flexibility, interpersonal sensitivity, initiative, tolerance to stress, and "public orientation." *Leadership* involves the "ability to lead a group or individual to effectively accomplish a task," while *staff development* involves "an ability to assess subordinates' strengths and weaknesses and address developmental needs through delegation and developmental assignments." Other leadership/personal skills are self explanatory save *public orientation*, which deals with the "ability to perceive and show positive reaction to current needs and future expectations of the public and its elected representatives." This attribute implies a proactive policy initiation role for Alberta executives. It also suggests a corporate orientation (a notion explored in greater detail below) at both executive levels.

Among *decision-making skills* are the ability to analyze situations and information, judgement, decisiveness, and creativeness. *Judgement* is defined as the "ability to evaluate situations and information and reach logical conclusions."

to be described by the EM II job description. Similarly, the jobs of third tier officials are presumed to be described by the EM I job description. The justification for taking liberties with the descriptions is based in the logic implied within them. This assumes a hierarchical relationship between the EM II and EM I, and assumes the presences of both in a hierarchical chain of command. The point is most evident in the division of labour in planning responsibilities between EM IIs and EM Is. EM IIs supposedly develop long-range plans, while EM Is develop medium-term ones. In straight reporting relationships between an EM I and a deputy minister (that is, in a relationship where the EM I is functionally defined as an ADM), it is highly unlikely that the deputy minister would not call upon the executive manager to conduct long-range planning. Similarly, it is difficult to accept that deputy ministers in these circumstances would refrain from requesting EM Is performing in the operationally defined ADM role to assess the effectiveness and determine the administrative direction and operating controls of programs and services

Creativeness is the “ability to generate innovative solutions to problem situations.” Of interest here is the problem-solving cast given to creativeness, and thereby the “reactive” definitional nature of creativity, which stands in contrast to the suggestion of proactiveness associated with leadership skills. *Administrative skills* are portrayed in familiar terminology, as executives must possess the abilities to plan and organize, delegate, and control. The *ability to control* requires the executive to use administrative controls effectively for evaluation, auditing, and monitoring functions. *Communication skills* include the capacity to speak, listen, write, and read effectively at a high standard and with efficiency.

Figure 3-1.—Key Job Descriptive Elements of Executive Manager I and Executive Manager II Officials Compared

Executive Manager I	Executive Manager II
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and direct several major functions. • Determine program priorities. • Formulate medium-term plans or program objectives. • Formulate policy recommendations. • Make program decisions which have large impact on operating methods and carry significant financial and program implications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate several interrelated autonomous programs. • Determine program priorities [assumed]. • Formulate long-range program and fiscal plans. • Formulate policy recommendations. • Assess the effectiveness and determine the direction and operating controls within which programs and services are administered.

Figure 3-1 compares key descriptive job elements of EM II and EM I officials that are derived from Personnel Administration Office job descriptions. There is an explicit notion of “degree” or weight of responsibility that distinguishes the Executive Manager I from the Executive Manager II. This is evident in Figure 3-1. EM I officials coordinate

and direct several major functions within an autonomous program, while EM II officials coordinate interrelated autonomous programs. Where EM Is formulate medium-term program plans and program objectives, EM IIs formulate long-range program and fiscal plans. Presumably, in the absence of an EM II, EM Is perform these duties.

Another function where there is a distinction is in defining operational methods and controls. Executive Manager Is are described as making program decisions having an *impact* on operating methods. EM IIs are responsible for *assessing* the effectiveness and *determining* operating controls for programs and services. The difference is more than one of degree. According to the PAO description, the EM I official operates within a program wherein the responsibility for direction and oversight falls to the EM II. Again, as above, EM Is who are operationally defined as ADMs presumably set program direction and oversee subordinates, as would EM IIs.

A second observation flowing from the executive manager job descriptions is that there are considerable functional similarities in the general responsibilities, notwithstanding the above distinctions. For example, both EM I and EM II officials are responsible for what is tersely described as formulating policy recommendations. This indicates that executive managers in the Alberta government actively participate in the policy-making process. The extent to which they are active, and what is meant by "policy," are matters for more detailed scrutiny. Although EM I and EM II officials have different planning horizons, it is nonetheless clear that all are involved in planning and objective setting that extends beyond the present-year operations of the programs under their charge.

Coordination also is a part of both jobs. Although little text accompanies the description of this important activity in the PAO job description, clearly the authors consider coordinating to be different from *doing*. Executive managers stand above the

routine performance of technical functions and presumably are responsible for coordinating and meshing these functions. Coordination also can have a broader meaning—hitching divisional activities to corporate and political requirements—but in this regard the PAO job descriptions are silent.

Testable propositions that are derived from the Alberta literature follow:

Proposition 1: Functions Performed by ADMs

ADMs demonstrate skills and activity in the major areas of leadership, decision-making, administration, and communication.

Proposition 2: Leadership—activities

In exercising leadership, ADMs assess subordinates' capacities, improve subordinates' potential through training and development assignments, delegate work, and negotiate with system actors to attain organizational objectives.

Proposition 2/Corollary 1: Leadership as Program Direction Setting

ADMs have greater responsibilities than subordinate executive managers in setting program direction.

Proposition 3: Leadership—attributes

As organizational leaders, ADMs exhibit flexibility, interpersonal sensitivity, initiative, tolerance to stress, and sensitivity to public and governmental needs.

Proposition 4: Administration

ADMs plan, organize, delegate, and control the administration of their organization. Controlling entails the effective use of administrative controls for evaluation, auditing, and monitoring.

Proposition 4/Corollary 1: Long-Range Plans

ADMs formulate long-range plans, whereas subordinate executive managers formulate medium-range plans.

Proposition 4/Corollary 2: Yearly Performance Objectives

Executive managers reporting to ADMs formulate yearly program performance objectives, whereas ADMs approve them.

Proposition 4/Corollary 3: Assessing Program Effectiveness

ADM responsibilities for assessing program effectiveness are significantly greater than those of subordinate executive managers.

Proposition 5: Communication

ADMs communicate widely.

Proposition 6: Policy Formulation

ADMs formulate policy proposals.

Proposition 7: Classification Distinctions within ADM Ranks

Operationally defined ADMs possessing different PAO executive management classification designations do not fundamentally differ in the requirements and performance of work.

Federal Profile of Public Service Leaders and Managers

Figure 3-2 is a modified version of the summary “profile” appearing on page 3 of the Treasury Board Secretariat/Public Service Commission’s publication. It has been amended by excluding the supervisor level characteristics but retaining descriptions of key characteristics of middle managers, directors, director generals, and ADM levels of officialdom.⁷ Since the federal profile is defined in terms of general behavioural attributes and characteristics (skills), it is similar to the Alberta “Executive Profile.” However, unlike the Alberta profile, but similar to the Alberta job descriptions, the federal profile distinguishes between characteristics that apply to all levels of management and those which focus on particular levels in the classification hierarchy.

⁷ The term “expression” is used in the profile in the following context: “The Profile also identifies core characteristics that define effective performance, characteristics that transcend specific functions, trends and preferred leadership styles of the day. As well, the Profile describes how the *expression* of a number of the core characteristics changes as one moves up the levels.” Treasury Board, “Profile of Leaders,” 1. Italics added for emphasis.

Thus the “expressions” referred to in the text pertain to the features which the authors of the profile attribute to the core characteristics at various levels of the hierarchy. These expressions are listed in point form in Appendix C. The summary titles of these expressions featured in figure 3-2 presume to capture the essence of the Appendix C items.

Universal characteristics include *judgement, integrity, self-confidence, behavioural flexibility, initiative, and perseverance*. Characteristics that have different expressions, depending on the level of the bureaucracy, include *leadership, thinking skills, organizational awareness, interpersonal relations, communication, action management, and knowledge*. There is an “additive” logic to the profile which its authors describe as follows:

the behavioural expressions of a characteristic developed at previous levels are present at successive levels. The earlier behaviours serve as “prerequisites” or building blocks for the next level. Therefore, earlier expressions are subsumed within the broader expression of that characteristic which becomes crucial for success in handling the challenges of the higher level.⁸

Given the additive character of the salient behavioural expressions, middle manager and director characteristics are included in figure 3-2, as they provide foundations for a better understanding of the director general and ADM jobs. Director general jobs are included for the same reason. A full description of key behavioural expressions for the ADM and director general levels is provided in Appendix C.

What distinguishes the ADM level from others found within the federal profile is that there is a political dimension to the job, although not necessarily a partisan dimension. ADMs have important responsibilities to ensure the organizations they head are managed with sensitivity to government priorities. Indeed, one of the knowledge requirements unique to the position is knowledge of the government’s immediate priorities. There is certainly a “corporate” orientation that requires the ADM to be attuned to the direction, dynamics, and requirements of the larger government enterprise.

⁸ Treasury Board, “Profile of Leaders,” 1. Given the additive character of the model, excluded supervisor level characteristics should be added to the list of general characteristics which apply across all levels. The excluded supervisor behavioural expressions include motivating, operational problem-solving, using services, sensitivity, instructing, and coordination.

Figure 3-2.—Federal Profile of Public Service Leaders and Managers

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Key Behavioural Expressions Referenced to Management Classification Level</i>			
	Middle Manager	Director	Director General	ADM
Judgement				
Integrity				
Self-confidence	Expression remains the same across levels.			
Behavioural flexibility				
Initiative				
Perseverance				
Leadership	Providing challenge	Employee development	Organizational influence	Creating vision/values
Thinking Skills	Problem formulation and anticipation	Integration	Strategic perspective	Extracting meaning
Organizational Awareness	Developing linkages	Organizational know-how	Building support	Political acumen
Interpersonal Relations	Handling group situations	Managing sensitive interpersonal situations	Diplomacy	Interpersonal versatility
Communication	Briefing	High impact communication	Strategic communication	Instilling commitment
Action Management	Planning	Direction/delegation	Orchestration	Sustaining action
Knowledge				

Clues to this corporate orientation are provided in other behaviours listed in the profile. For example, federal ADMs are called upon to resolve conflicts that involve

clients, senior executives in other organizations, and politicians and employees at all levels of the organization. They are also required to communicate with a range of actors with “finesse and polish.”

Federal director generals also have corporate responsibilities, but these appear to be narrowly focused. For example, director generals are charged with building and maintaining alliances and networks of clients, colleagues, and interest groups. However, it is the ADM who appears to establish the parameters of these relationships through conflict resolution and organizational direction setting.

Federal ADMs are distinguished from lower management levels. They are mandated to lead and, borrowing a term not used but implied in the description, to serve as the *key agents* of the organization. To effect organizational leadership, ADMs involve themselves in a variety of activities. They collect information from a broad range of sources, since it is necessary for them to remain informed about “international and global issues of the day, current and emerging, which have an impact on or influence the organization.” They must determine what they want the organization to be in a way that can be effectively communicated to staff and others. This requires that the ADM conceive and define organizational vision and values as well as be responsible for proselytizing them. This proselytizing is described in the federal profile as “instilling commitment” and involves a variety of communication strategies including fostering organizational discourse and promoting the vision in the organization, to clients, and to others.

The profile identifies a theatrical aspect to the ADM job as the officials are described using “personal example, symbols or other means to clearly and compellingly relate a future state and direction for the organization which generates enthusiasm and commitment at all levels.” Director generals are charged with promoting communications within the organization, i.e., to promote “the organization’s messages, products and

services to other clients, higher level management, and subordinates in a purposeful and timely manner which gains and sustains their support." These messages include those of organizational vision and values. While both ADMs and director generals are in the business of communicating, the role of ADMs is decidedly sweeping. Indeed, the profile identifies the director general as the official who is responsible for ensuring that the management team supports and promotes the transformational objectives of the ADM. Thus, there is a division of labour in that the ADM's prescriptions are proselytized by director generals.

ADMs act as a source of energy and supply the force that guides organizational activities along a determined path. Organizational direction must be accomplished through abstract means and often by others. ADMs therefore are responsible for creating systems that permit them to ensure accountability and review activities using strategic measures. Director generals are charged with developing the strategic plans that provide the yardsticks for achievement within the accountability system. Implicitly, ADMs approve plans but it is explicitly stated that they evaluate how well objectives are met. The profile is noticeably stingy in describing the particulars involved in this aspect of ADM work. It is not clear the extent to which the ADM is the official who designs the systems, or for that matter whether the official *invests* in the systems that suit his or her purposes. One can speculate on the extent to which authorship and sponsorship of systems rest with the position.

Another aspect of the federal ADM job is typified as *extracting meaning* and is described in terms of "reducing phenomena to fundamental concepts and basic objectives" and "enriching understanding." When these attributes are compared with those listed for the director general, the differences seem to be negligible. However, the profile reserves a special quotient of judgement for ADMs which exists by virtue of

position, incumbent experience, and the quality of the individual found in the ADM job. It may be assumed that this judgement quotient is applied to all manner of proposals and decisions that affect organizational activity.

In sum, federal ADMs are distinguished from subordinates by (1) their corporate orientation and requirement to be politically sensitive, (2) their special responsibilities for managing organizational conflict and for representing the organization to outside interests, (3) their duty to lead and transform the organization, (4) their responsibility for sustaining the overall initiative of the organization, and (5) the special judgement that they bring to the conduct of organizational affairs. Federal director generals exhibit many of these behaviours, but all the same they operate in the lee of ADM activity. Still, they contribute judgement, represent the organization, engage outside clients, and provide strategic direction within the organization. Where ADMs differ most significantly from director generals is in their responsibility for authorship of organizational direction, fashioning and proselytizing the ideational vocabulary that gives meaning to organizational direction, and ensuring that the organization avoids the hazards that can derail the programs to which the ADM is committed.

Pertinent questions arise from a survey of the federal profile. What does the profile suggest concerning the propositions derived from the Alberta literature? What new propositions and insights are suggested by the profile?

There is a similarity in the lists of attributes and skills of senior officials in both governments. Alberta and federal executives demonstrate skills and activity in the major areas of leadership, decision making, administration, and communication. They are also involved in formulating policy. Therefore, the broad construct of executive work is similar, and the federal profile nominally sustains Proposition 1 and Proposition 6. Characteristics such as initiative, behavioural flexibility, judgement, and perseverance are

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found on federal and Alberta lists and apply to all managerial ranks. The federal attribute of integrity presumably is absent from the Alberta list only by omission.

It is clear that the Alberta and federal ADM officials have more sweeping charges than their executive management subordinates. Also clear is that as one scales the hierarchy there is an increase in the intellectual abstraction of the work. Both Alberta and federal descriptions suggest ADMs are responsible for the establishment of operating controls by which the organization can be managed. In this the federal description sustains Corollary 3 to Proposition 4.

Federal ADMs apply an extra quotient of judgement when they extract meaning and enrich understandings relating to the organization and the environment. The vague reference to *public orientation* in the Alberta profile, with its "ability to perceive and show positive reaction to current needs and future expectations," touches upon this aspect of the federal profile. However, the Alberta descriptions are mute on whether the ADM adds a special quotient of judgement and meaning. This said, it is logical that they do add judgement. The hierarchical distinction made in Proposition 2/Corollary 1 between ADMs and executive manager subordinates suggests they add judgement. Therefore, a corollary is added to Proposition 3:

Proposition 3/Corollary 1: Judgement

ADMs exercise an "extra quotient" of judgement pertaining to organizational and extra-organizational matters which distinguishes them from subordinate executive managers.

Alberta and federal ADMs are described as being involved in a level of long-range organizational planning and direction setting not attributed to their subordinates. However, an important distinction exists between Alberta and federal ADMs. The division of labour between Alberta officialdom is captured in Corollary 1 and Corollary 2 of Proposition 4. Alberta subordinate executive managers presumably focus on medium-

range plans. Federal director generals possess specific responsibilities for developing and implementing strategic plans which tie programs and services to broad policy objectives. They, not the ADMs, are responsible for strategic planning. Presumably medium-range planning is entrusted to lower rungs of the hierarchy.

There are other dissimilarities between the Alberta and federal descriptions. It is not apparent from PAO documents that Alberta ADMs are charged with the same strategic and leadership responsibilities as federal ADMs. Proposition 2/Corollary 1 does specify that Alberta ADMs have greater organizational leadership responsibilities than their subordinates. Moreover, these leadership responsibilities are consistent with the broad description of leadership supplied in the federal profile.

However, the impression is that Alberta ADMs enjoy less broad independent responsibility to lead their organizations than their federal counterparts, less freedom to create a "vision" and implement it. The weight of the federal ADM job appears to rest on framing organizational vision and direction, and sustaining them. There does not appear to be an Alberta parallel.

A corollary to Proposition 2 that captures this lacuna in the Alberta ADM job is framed as follows:

Proposition 2/Corollary 2: Limited Visionary Leadership

Creating and instilling a vision, a set of values, and an organizational climate in which goals can be achieved is not a central feature of the Alberta ADM job.

A question arising from the corollary regards the nature of ADM leadership. If not visionary leadership, then what? Assuming that "visionary" leadership is supplied within the organization, presumably at the deputy ministerial level, then the Alberta ADM's leadership responsibilities may be better captured in descriptions of the federal director general. Alternatively, it is possible that "visionary" leadership is lacking. In this instance

a less "heroic" form of leadership that focuses on sustaining action and incremental repositioning of the organization could be the norm.

In the "subaltern" role, where the deputy or political executive provides visionary leadership, the Alberta ADM *cum* federal director general would be responsible for gaining and sustaining the interest and support of the management team for strategies which realize the vision and values of the organization. This description is compatible with the tasks reserved for federal ADMs in *sustaining action* through directing and maintaining the organization's activities in line with the government's plans and priorities. These tasks are in turn compatible with other federal ADM tasks relating to the exercise of *political acumen* wherein the official is charged with positioning and reorienting the organization to meet emerging trends and to achieve organizational and governmental objectives. In short, it is possible to conceive of organization leadership activity bereft of the heroic leadership dimension defined in the federal profile.

Acknowledgement of elements of leadership that are not "visionary" permits the following corollary:

Proposition 2/Corollary 3: Incremental Leadership

Organizational leadership exercised by ADMs involves:

- (a) positioning and reorienting the organization to meet emerging trends, and to achieve organizational and governmental objectives.
- (b) directing the organization's activities to align with the government's plans and priorities.
- (c) sustaining the organization's momentum towards accomplishing goals.
- (d) gaining and sustaining the interest and support of the subordinate executive management team for strategies which realize the vision and values of the organization.

To accomplish these tasks, federal ADMs establish and maintain accountability systems which review activities and goals with strategies. Something very similar to this

activity is suggested in the Alberta literature, and captured in Proposition 4/Corollary 3. As developing and maintaining effective accountability systems is reasonably implied in the Alberta literature, Corollary 3 is amended to read:

Proposition 4/Corollary 3: Assessing Program Effectiveness

ADM responsibilities for assessing program effectiveness are significantly greater than those of subordinate executive managers. To fulfill these responsibilities ADMs establish and maintain accountability systems which review activities and goals relative to strategies.

The broad communication and representation responsibilities of the federal ADMs are also absent from the Alberta documents. It is not clear from the Alberta documentation whether ADMs are charged with communicating symbolically and taking the initiative to proselytize their organizational vision. Certainly the postulate that Alberta ADMs do not possess the same freedom of initiative as their federal counterparts casts doubt that they proselytize an organizational vision and communicate broadly and symbolically. The theatrical characteristic present in federal ADM communications therefore cannot be assumed for Alberta ADMs.

The only mention made in the Alberta literature of ADM representational and communications responsibilities focuses on the banalities of speaking, listening, writing, and reading, and of a "public orientation," suggesting an extra-organizational orientation. What these oblique references imply for internal representations and communications is undetermined. The same murkiness applies to internal communications.

The federal profile defines ADM communication activity in terms of visionary leadership, which is hypothesized as not germane to the Alberta ADM. Therefore, those aspects of the federal profile that presumably apply to the Alberta circumstance are either director general responsibilities or ADM responsibilities not demonstrably tied to visionary leadership. Of these options, the director general items listed under *strategic*

communication are the most instructive. Framed as a corollary to Proposition 5, they posit:

Proposition 5/Corollary 2

Alberta ADMs:

- (a) capitalize on existing communication vehicles and create new ones to ensure effective internal and external communication.
- (b) promote the organization's messages, products, and services to other clients, higher level management, and subordinates in a purposeful and timely manner which gains and sustains their support.

Interestingly, the federal ADM is less involved than director generals in the development and maintenance of extra-organizational liaison networks, since ADMs supervise this activity. No evidence in the Alberta literature deals with this aspect of the ADM job. However, it is not unreasonable to assume that Alberta and federal ADM responsibilities are parallel in this area, as this aspect of the job does not seem to be tied to any visionary leadership provision. Therefore, an additional corollary to Proposition 5 is warranted:

Proposition 5/Corollary 3: Subordinates as Principal Agents of External Liaison

ADMs supervise subordinate executive managers who build and maintain alliances and networks of clients, colleagues, and interest groups inside and outside the organization.

Although it is possible that ADMs conduct extra-organizational representations with only the business of their specific divisions in mind, the sweeping charges reserved for federal ADMs indicates they carry responsibilities involving the general well-being of the departmental organization and the broader government public administration. Federal ADMs are expected to balance "conflicting demands from the political level, external interest groups, and the organization." The implication is that the official is an agent of an abstract, transcending "collective good." Something similar to this collective or corporate orientation is glimpsed in the Alberta literature's brief mention of a "public orientation"

expectation. Arguably the federal reference is substantively different, as Alberta executives are expected to be sensitive and responsible while federal ADMs are charged with actively balancing the interests and concerns of major players. Yet, the Alberta executives are exhorted to be sensitive to broader interests.

Chapter 2 portrays Alberta officialdom as operating in an environment where political leaders are especially mindful of their responsibility to represent the public good. They are especially hostile to officialdom's claim to represent a higher public interest. Under these circumstances it is questionable whether Alberta ADMs' public orientation extends so far as an independent stewardship over the public good. These notions are captured in Proposition 8 and its first corollary. The proposition uses the federal profile text, as the Alberta literature suggests that some form of "corporate" responsibility exists but is unclear as to its particulars:

Proposition 8: Corporate Responsibilities

ADMs possess corporate responsibilities that extend beyond their immediate responsibilities to manage their line organization.

Proposition 8/Corollary 1: The Public Good and Corporate Responsibilities

Although ADMs possess important "corporate" responsibilities, they do not involve balancing conflicting demands from the political level, external interest groups, and the organization in order to serve a higher concept of the public good.

In summary, differences between the Alberta and federal ADMs may reflect an absence of a broad commission for independent action on the part of Alberta officials. Alternatively, they may simply appear to exist owing to the incompleteness of the Alberta descriptions. The important matter is not the differences between the Alberta and federal descriptions, but whether elements of the federal description apply to an Alberta description. Analysis indicates a number of similarities between federal and Alberta ADMs. It also reveals that in certain instances the practice of federal director generals

may be closer to that of the Alberta ADM than that of their federal namesake. The extent to which this is true becomes clearer as relevant propositions are tested.

Deputy Minister Tasks and Functions

The deputy minister is variously described as functioning like a hinge between the political world and the administrative world,⁹ as an authority residing between the partial political and the impartial public servant,¹⁰ as a key advisory resource to the minister, and as "the primary link between the minister and the department."¹¹ Timothy Plumptre expands upon these descriptions and identifies four functions of the deputy position: policy advice, expenditure planning and control, organizational leadership, and performance of special assignments.¹² This list is similar to that offered by a former clerk of the privy council, Gordon Osbaldeston, who writes of three principal functions: collective management, policy advice, and internal department management.¹³ As Osbaldeston's description of the deputy position is more complete, his is the one that will be used to investigate the deputy's role.

With Osbaldeston's "collective management," the deputy minister is responsible to the Cabinet on matters relating to policy or "policy coordination." The deputy minister is also responsible for such bodies as the Treasury Board and the Public Service

⁹ Robert Normand, "Les relations entre les hauts fonctionnaires et le ministre," *Canadian Public Administration* 27, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 528, as cited in Timothy Plumptre, "New Perspectives on the Role of the Deputy Minister," *Canadian Public Administration* 30, no. 3 (Fall 1987): 377.

¹⁰ A. W. Johnson, "The Role of the Deputy Minister," *Canadian Public Administration* 4 (December 1961): 364.

¹¹ Gordon Osbaldeston, *Keeping Deputy Ministers Accountable* (Scarborough, Ont.: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1989), 15.

¹² Plumptre, "New Perspectives," 381ff.

¹³ Osbaldeston, *Keeping Deputy Ministers Accountable*, 18-19. Osbaldeston's and Plumptre's policy advice functions are essentially the same. So too are their respective departmental management and organizational leadership functions. Osbaldeston's collective management function embraces Plumptre's expenditure planning and control and special assignment functions.

Commission, "as part of the requirement to achieve particular government priorities, maintain overall standards of management, and ensure the degree of consensus of cohesion necessary for the Government to function."¹⁴ The collective management responsibility is a consequence of deputy ministers being appointed by the prime minister. They are responsible to the prime minister and the government while remaining politically neutral. Hence, deputy ministers are more than ministerial appointees even though they work for a given minister. What this means is that when executing departmental responsibilities deputy ministers also operate with attention to the overall priorities and concerns of the government. In short, they are responsible to the corporate entity of the government.¹⁵ Being corporately responsible also results in federal deputy ministers being given special governmental assignments.¹⁶

Federal deputy ministers have specific duties written into legislation that pertain directly to maintaining corporate management standards.¹⁷ This means that deputy ministers have multiple accountability relationships that compete for the deputy minister's time and priorities. Commenting on the competing accountability relationships of deputy heads, Osbaldeston observes that the federal deputy ministers often function as "brokers, reconciling differences between the minister's interests and the concerns of other departments, ministers, central agencies, and the Prime Minister."¹⁸ In meeting their collective management responsibilities, federal deputies are therefore expected to comply

¹⁴ Ibid., 19-20.

¹⁵ Ibid., 18.

¹⁶ Plumptre, "New Perspectives," 391-93.

¹⁷ Ibid., 377-80.

¹⁸ Osbaldeston, 20.

with the dictates of their political superiors, while at the same time standing apart from the government and operating as neutral public servants.

At the heart of the policy advice function is the responsibility for providing the minister with ideas and options on how "to cope with emerging issues or advise on the likely courses of action the minister may be contemplating."¹⁹ Plumptre declares that tendering "policy advice" is different from offering "political advice," and further distinguishes it from "partisan advice."²⁰ He also acknowledges that the distinction between policy advice and political advice is so subtle that some ministers have difficulty grasping the nuances. A veteran federal deputy minister writes:

The knowledge of officials is not limited to the management and technical aspects of the department. They also know the issues that go with the portfolio; they have lived through past attempts, successful and otherwise, to deal with these issues; they can be expected to have a fairly extensive knowledge of the department's client population.... For all of these reasons, the advice provided by deputy ministers and senior officials includes advice that is "political"—not *partisan* in the sense of advising the government how to do in the Opposition, but political in the sense of giving ministers assessment of likely reactions, particularly by the department's clientele, to a course of action under discussion.²¹

The deputy minister also has an advocacy role that is associated with the broader function of the minister's agenda. Here, the deputy must balance the minister's agenda with essential departmental responsibilities. It falls to the deputy to communicate the departmental purpose and mandate to the minister. The deputy functions as a steward of the department's interest in the continuing relationships that the department has with outside organizations and agencies. Such advocacy bears on the management of the minister's agenda as it contributes to its definition. The permanency of the bureaucracy

¹⁹ Plumptre, "New Perspectives," 382.

²⁰ Timothy Plumptre, *Beyond the Bottom Line* (Halifax: Institute for Research in Public Policy, 1989), 157.

²¹ Arthur Kroeger, "On Being a Deputy Minister," *Policy Options* 13, no. 4 (May 1992): 4.

and the continuing relationships between the department and outside interests add force to the deputy minister's suasion. Yet, it would be false to represent the deputy's activity in ministerial agenda management as principally that of contested advocacy. Deputies exercise important responsibilities representing the ministerial agenda to the department, other deputies, parliament, interest groups, the press and public, and other politicians. In this regard they act very much as ministerial deputies.

The deputy minister is immediately responsible to the minister for the administrative performance of the department. Although ministers are said to be answerable for departmental errors and problems, it is the deputy minister upon whom falls the responsibility for sound management. Osbaldeston identifies four principal aspects of the deputy minister's departmental management function:

- serving as the department's core communications channel
- acting as the main decision maker on recommendations to the minister
- leading and managing the senior executive team and staff
- managing the organization's external environment²²

Osbaldeston's "core communications channel" nomenclature is inelegant but the basic meaning is clear: the deputy minister is the departmental official through whom the communication "between all elements within the organization and among the department, minister and outside agencies or groups such as central agencies, provinces, etc. [flows]."²³ According to Osbaldeston, serving as the core communication link with the minister and other senior politicians places deputies in a unique position to sensitize

²² This list is provided with short descriptors on page 120 of Osbaldeston, *Keeping Deputy Ministers Accountable*, with the particulars described more completely in chapter 5.

²³ Osbaldeston, 120.

members of the department to the requirements of the government. Indeed, Osbaldeston relates as a job imperative the need to

make senior officials aware of the minister's and the government's political objectives and constraints so that they can take account of these factors in their work...the [department executive] management team must be given a good sense of the minister's personality, including background, interests, and method of approaching a problem.²⁴

To accomplish this task, deputies may structure situations in which senior departmental personnel and the minister come into contact. More generally, whether or not deputy ministers provide opportunities for ADMs and other executives to interact with the minister, it falls principally to the deputy minister to communicate the minister's agenda to the department, not only through his or her own activities, but through the departmental executive team.²⁵

As leaders of the senior executive team, deputy ministers must build an executive management team "capable of carrying out the minister's agenda with the minimal direction permitted by the deputy minister's and the minister's schedule."²⁶ It is through this senior executive group, composed of assistant deputy ministers and "staff" officials, that the deputy can control departmental management. Staff appointments are the most efficacious means deputy ministers use to fashion the senior management team. Using language similar to that found in the ADM job profiles, Osbaldeston states that most deputy ministers use components of corporate planning and control processes to create an accountability framework for subordinate staff:

Deputy ministers must ensure that systems to control administrative practices and to promote sound program management are in place in the department...[but] once they are in place, the deputy minister can delegate the responsibility for running

²⁴ Ibid., 123.

²⁵ Ibid., 126.

²⁶ Ibid., 121.

them and free their time for managing less controllable aspects of their environment.²⁷

Deputies strive to provide their senior managers with mutually understood expectations that are "as quantifiable and consistent as possible."²⁸ According to Osbaldeston, subordinates' jobs lend themselves more easily to such quantification because they are not held to the same level of accountability as the deputy minister.²⁹

Plumptre laments that the departmental management function tends to be neglected in favour of the policy advisory one.³⁰ More pointedly, he is critical of deputies who fail to provide leadership in setting departmental direction by not paying enough attention to operational requirements to ensure sound internal administration of departments.³¹ However, Osbaldeston tempers his remarks:

While departmental management is placing greater requirements on deputy ministers, their time is increasingly occupied with other tasks...deputy ministers have to spend more time playing broker between ministers and ministers of state; coordinating with the minister's office; responding to parliamentary committees on behalf of the minister. It is therefore becoming more difficult for deputy ministers to balance the need to provide direction and management leadership to the department with the demands of their other functions.³²

Deputy ministers are clearly whip-sawed when seeking to balance requirements. The answer on the managerial side appears to be delegation, which has significant import for the ADM who has been delegated many important managerial functions.

²⁷ Ibid., 118.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 119.

³⁰ Plumptre, *Beyond the Bottom Line*, 390. Osbaldeston notes that while the requirement to pay greater attention to internal management has increased in its importance, so too have other requirements which compete for the federal deputy minister's time. See Osbaldeston, 137-38.

³¹ The call for more attention to management is contained in John L. Manion's much debated "New Challenges in Public Administration," *Canadian Public Administration* 31, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 234-46.

³² Osbaldeston, *Keeping Deputy Ministers Accountable*, 137-38.

Managing the organizational environment is another deputy ministerial responsibility. In this context, "managing the environment" is euphemistic for the maintenance of important departmental relationships. The deputy is called upon to liaise with a broad constituency and to put the Department's interests forward through these contacts. Moreover, the deputy is called upon to intervene in disputes that cannot be resolved at lower departmental levels. The division of responsibility between deputy and ADM is expressed in these terms:

A deputy minister has to develop a management team. The ADM's job is to work with the clients, who are extremely demanding and who demand a lot of time. As head of the departmental family, I have responsibility to my department and staff. The deputy minister has to be careful not to be the bottleneck. Therefore, delegation is required.³³

Deducing Features of the ADM Role from Descriptions of the Deputy Job

The foregoing account of the deputy minister's position provides a number of clues concerning the roles and activities of ADMs. First, it is clear that deputy ministers are not the only source of departmental policy advice to the minister. Indeed, Osbaldeston depicts the deputy as essentially a consumer and processor of policy proposals, and leaves the impression that executive officials below the deputy minister level are often in a better position to provide advice.³⁴ Plumptre leaves no doubt that the deputy minister relies upon subordinate officials, often found within specialized policy units, to develop policy proposals.³⁵ Therefore, this rudimentary corollary is ventured:

Proposition 6/Corollary 1: Offering Policy Advice

Advising the political executive, the minister, and the deputy minister is an important feature of the ADM job.

³³ Ibid., 120.

³⁴ Ibid., 85, figure 4-2.

³⁵ Plumptre, *Beyond the Bottom Line*, chapter 10.

Second, the deputy ministerial literature suggests that ADMs are buffered by the deputy minister from the partisan domain of the minister and the cabinet. Mindful that this applies to the federal scene, and that the Alberta literature is silent on interactions between politicians and administrators, the following Proposition 6 corollaries are ventured:

Proposition 6/Corollary 2: Political Content

When deputy ministers buffer ADMs and subordinate officials from the political domain, the content of ADM advice to the deputy minister and minister is preponderantly administrative in character.

Proposition 6/Corollary 3: Deputy as Gatekeeper of Ministerial Access

ADM contact with the minister and other members of the political executive is controlled by the deputy minister.

Third, commentators fail to mention deputy ministers sharing their *collective responsibility* with subordinates. This is not to suggest that ADMs are excused from promoting the government's and minister's agenda, a point made in Proposition 8. However, on the strength of the literature they appear not to insert themselves into intergovernmental disputes as deputy ministers do. Nor do ADMs appear to take up special assignments on behalf of the "corporate" government, although they presumably are called upon to represent the minister and, therefore, the government. Thus, Proposition 8 is sustained on the matter of representational responsibilities. However, as ADMs are apparently not subject to the same multiple accountabilities as deputy ministers, it is unlikely that the scope and character of ADM collective management responsibilities are as expansive and demanding as those of deputies. The point is captured in this corollary:

Proposition 8/Corollary 2: Collective Management Responsibilities

ADMs' collective management responsibilities are fundamentally different from those of deputy ministers, as they do not possess multiple accountabilities to political and administrative authorities.

Whether ADMs promote the minister's agenda to external agencies and clients is not discussed, although such representation would be logical insofar as Osbaldeston states that the ADM's job is to work with clients. Nominally, Proposition 8 is sustained, yet Osbaldeston's suggestion that a significant feature of the ADM job is to work with external clients calls into question the third corollary of Proposition 5—subordinates as principal agents of external liaison. This observation suggests that federal ADMs are considerably more active in extra-organizational liaison matters than the federal profile states. Thus, Proposition 5/Corollary 3, which is derived from the federal profile, may not be true, and this raises the question of whether the corollary should stand. It will be left to do so, since the profile has been developed through a more rigorous process and presumes to speak directly to the ADM experience—something that Osbaldeston does not presume. In any event, the verity of the proposition in the Alberta context will be directly tested in the next chapter.

Federal ADMs are important participants in the departmental communication channel, although they do not enjoy the strategic position of the deputy. Osbaldeston indicates that deputies rely on departmental senior executives to communicate ministerial and deputy ministerial agendas to the organization. This observation is consistent with Corollary 2 of Proposition 5, and therefore is assumed to apply to Alberta ADMs. Similarly, Osbaldeston's deputies rely upon these officials for information within and outside the organization, a suggestion consistent with propositions and corollaries addressing ADM policy advising and communicating. Interestingly, Osbaldeston's depiction of federal ADM work in this area comes closer to the federal profile description of director general activities.

In contrast to the impression offered by the federal profile, the deputy ministerial literature suggests there is a great deal of "doing" involved in the ADM position. ADMs

are more involved than deputy ministers in managing departmental programs and systems. Osbaldeston maintains that deputies' time constraints, multiple accountabilities, and lack of specialized expertise limits the amount of attention they can give to the operational particulars of programs and administration.³⁶ ADMs have the luxury of being able to focus on more specific areas of endeavour on a continuing basis. Moreover, Osbaldeston states that deputies leave the operation of systems to those who report to them, which clearly implies a heavier managerial responsibility at the ADM level.

Leadership at the deputy level is acknowledged to be important but as has been pointed out, the capacity to assert leadership is confounded by a number of factors, not the least of which is the fragmented character of many federal departments. Perhaps the true corporate entities within the departmental organization are found at the sub-departmental level. Thus, the most logical bureaucratic level to take up the mantle of the organization would be that of the ADM.

These observations do not add to the propositions concerning Alberta ADM leadership, except to underscore that within Whitehall-styled public administrations, considerable responsibility for organizational leadership is situated below the deputy head.

Osbaldeston's acknowledgement of the importance of ADM relations with clients has been cited. What has yet to be noted is the ADM's role in managing organizational

³⁶ Perhaps the strongest statement on the relative marginality of financial and personnel management functions at the deputy level is found in Donald J. Savoie, *The Politics of Public Spending in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 226: "It is hardly possible to overemphasize that the management of financial and human resources in government is forced to take a back seat to politics and the policy process. Former clerk of the Privy Council Gordon Osbaldeston acknowledges this and goes on to argue that it should be the case. He writes: 'Another problem with the management standards approach to accountability is that by concentrating on good performance in specific functions we can lose sight of the purpose for which the department was created, and thus reduce the capacity of the department to respond to the legitimate purposes of the ministers.... Management standards must be tailored specifically to each department's situation, and must be viewed as only a small part of the requirements of managing an organization which is intended to support and serve the Minister and the government.'"

and extra-organizational conflict. As deputies inherit conflicts that have not been satisfactorily resolved at lower levels, the implication is that ADMs are involved in conflict resolution and mediation with departmental and extra-departmental actors. Presumably ADMs operate with relative independence, for the deputy is portrayed as an arbiter of final resort. This notion is captured below:

Proposition 5/Corollary 4: ADM as Arbiter of Conflicts

ADMs actively manage organizational and extra-organizational conflicts to limit the deputy's burden.

In sum, ADMs are cast by the deputy ministerial literature as operating on the administrative slope of the politics-administration divide. As such they have neither the same amount of accountability nor the same government level corporate responsibilities. While ADMs advise ministers, this appears to be done with the deputy's permission, as advice-giving is the deputy's prerogative. ADMs are never portrayed as being strong program or departmental advocates in dealing with politicians. Recent literature is largely silent on the ADM's role in advocating policy to the deputy minister, although ADMs make policy proposals to the deputy.³⁷

The ADM roles in the literature are to expedite the government's, minister's, and deputy's objectives, manage programs, and conduct extra-departmental liaison. There is no question that ADMs play an important role in communicating ministerial and deputy ministerial agendas to the organization. However, the relationship is blurred when one examines organizational leadership and the extent to which ADMs operate with

³⁷ R. M. Burns comments in a 1961 article that one of the more important functions of the deputy is to function as a filter to protect the minister against experts. The implication is that the bureaucracy presses its case to the deputy who has a responsibility to consider the wisdom of the proposals before passing them on to the minister. The role reserved for the ADM in this circumstance is by implication as one of the experts—assuming, of course, that ADMs were plentiful in the period when Burns was writing. See R. M. Burns, "The Role of the Deputy Minister," *Canadian Public Administration* 4 (December 1961): 58.

independence in managing issues. The general impression is that the federal ADMs depicted in the deputy ministerial literature possess latitude and independence in organizational leadership and issues management. However, this leadership occurs under deputy ministerial purview. Issue resolution presumably is dealt with at the ADM level (and lower in the departmental structure) unless intervention by the deputy minister is necessary.

An interesting question is whether the federally referenced deputy ministerial literature's depiction of the ADM role portrays Alberta ADMs more accurately than their federal counterparts. The suggestion stems from the managerially centred characterizations of ADM roles in the deputy ministerial writings which find a parallel in the Alberta descriptions. An empirical examination is required to determine whether Alberta ADMs conform more closely to the deputy ministerial literature characterization than do federal ADMs. Given the vagaries of the Alberta job descriptions and profiles, and of the deputy ministerial literature, it is entirely possible that the literature understates the activism and significance of the federal ADM position, and in so doing accurately portrays an Alberta ADM role that may be less activist and more managerial than its federal counterpart.

Perspectives Offered by the Broader Public Administration Literature

The international public administration literature on executive practices and functions provides valuable perspectives that presumably apply to the Alberta ADM job. Two studies which are ageless and relevant, and particularly important, are the Comparative Elite Project (CEP),³⁸ a wide-ranging international study conducted in the 1970s, and a study of American public service executives conducted in the 1960s by John

³⁸ Joel D. Aberbach, Robert D. Putnam, and Bert A. Rockman, *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

R. Corson and R. Shale Paul.³⁹ The comparative elite study is not only the most detailed study of public administration behaviour published, it is also pertinent for its focus on an officialdom that is analogous to the ADM level.⁴⁰

Corson and Paul first examine officials who are generally in the same relative position to the senior-most administrative officer as ADMs—a level below the top career administrator. They divide the officials into three cohorts that have some semblance to those that are considered relevant to this analysis: program managers, supporting staff managers, and professionals in management.⁴¹ Particularly important are the authors' cogent descriptions of officials' management activities, which are not found in subsequent executive studies. The descriptions provide an additional perspective on managerial functions of senior officials while also providing a basis for the comparison of public administration practices with those described within the general management literature.

³⁹ John J. Corson and R. Shale Paul, *Men Near the Top: Filling Key Posts in the Federal Service* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Press, 1966).

⁴⁰ Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 27. The CEP authors note that the sampling procedure was the most complex feature of their study and comment that although they were aiming at the structural equivalent of the British under-secretary they sometimes netted larger and smaller fish. Nevertheless, they were targeting the equivalent of the Canadian federal ADM and director general.

⁴¹ See Corson and Paul, *Men Near the Top*, 54–55. *Program managers* are officials who are responsible for managing a substantive program area organization and in this are analogous to this study's program delivery cohort. *Supporting staff managers* are defined as managers responsible for overseeing a great variety of functions which support operations of the organization as a whole, including facilities management, fiscal affairs (financial administration), personnel, public relations, employee training, planning and research, procurement, and Congressional (legislative) liaison. This cohort has been divided into two groups for our purposes: (1) administrative and operational support personnel who are involved in all the functions associated with Corson and Paul's supporting staff managers save planning and research and legislative liaison, and (2) planning and policy managers who are responsible for planning and research and legislative liaison. A third cohort defined comprises *professionals in management*, who are viewed as unique by Corson and Paul, as they are responsible for the production of staffs of professionals engaged in work on specialized problems. This work is usually organized on a project basis and therefore differs from that which is routinely overseen by the program manager, which is best categorized as "continuing." The organizations which these officials head are said to be highly specialized; many are science-based research shops although they also may focus on economic or legal research. Arguably, free-standing policy units qualify as such organizations, and management practice in these organizations deserves separate attention.

(1) Perspectives from the Comparative Elite Project (1981)

Joel Aberbach and his colleagues identify nine roles associated with the policy-making responsibilities of senior bureaucrats in European and American governments.⁴² When the roles are factor analyzed, three dimensions emerge which are labeled to depict principal role focus poles: *politics/techniques*, *authority/responsiveness*, and *umpire/player*. Bureaucrats fall heavily at the *techniques* end of the politics/techniques continuum, which indicates a general eschewal of advocacy and partisan participation in the policy process, and concentration on providing technical solutions to policy problems. Bureaucrat and politician roles are less well defined on the other two dimensions. Bureaucrats are more heavily distributed toward the "authority" pole of the authority/responsiveness continuum and politicians more toward the "responsiveness" pole. Politicians and bureaucrats alike registering at the authority end of the continuum orient their activities toward brokering conflict, making policy, and representing the national interest.

CEP researchers state that the general division of labour between politicians and administrators on the authority/responsiveness dimension conforms to their Image III portrayal of bureaucrat-politician relations. This "image" is one of four constructed to portray different types of bureaucrat-politician relationships. In Image III both bureaucrats and politicians engage in policy making and are concerned with politics. However, for Aberbach and his colleagues:

⁴² See Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 86-91. The foci are: (1) *technician*, solving technical policy problems and applying specialized knowledge; (2) *advocate*, fighting for or representing the interests of a broad social group, class, or cause, or protesting an injustice; (3) *broker*, mediating or resolving conflicts of interest and political conflict; (4) *facilitator*, protecting the interests of specific clientele groups or constituents; (5) *partisan*, dealing with partisan politics; (6) *policymaker*, formulating policy; (7) *trustee*, focusing on one's role as a representative of the state; (8) *legalist*, focusing on legal processes or legalistic definitions of one's responsibilities; (9) *ombudsman*, undertaking case work for protecting and defending the interests of individual constituents and clients.

The real distinction between them is this: whereas politicians articulate broad, diffuse interests of unorganized individuals, bureaucrats mediate narrow, focused interests of organized clienteles...politicians are passionate, partisan, idealistic, even ideological; bureaucrats are, by contrast, prudent, centrist, practical, pragmatic.⁴³

Image III bureaucrats are interested in a particular kind of politics—maintaining an equilibrium among defined groups and organized clienteles within the political system. This mediation occurs within the “existing parallelogram of political forces” which administrators take as a given. Administrators’ political activity therefore takes place between bureaucracy and client groups, and within the bureaucracy and government.

The division between politicians and administrators on the politics/techniques dimension is closer to the Image II model, which has both politicians and bureaucrats participating in the making of policy.⁴⁴ Within this scheme, both bureaucrats and politicians bring special attributes to the policy process. Administrators are viewed as the keepers of knowledge and neutral expertise. They know the technical efficacy of policies, while politicians have knowledge of particular interests and of public values. Stated more expansively, comparative elite authors posit:

Image II assigns to politicians the special task of articulating and balancing and mediating diverse claims and divergent interests, of formulating and reformulating and resolving social conflicts...whereas the work of civil servants entails a holistic conception of the public interest based on objectively fixed standards and informed judgement. In this theory, bureaucrats should be responsive to political direction....⁴⁵

The umpire/player factor is less clear in its dimensional poles,⁴⁶ and in the image-implied analogues. Aberbach et al. observe that this dimension “seems less likely to

⁴³ Aberbach et al., 9.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 48.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 7.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 88.

distinguish civil servants from politicians than to differentiate members of each group from one another."⁴⁷ Players in this scheme are activists who rate the policy-making and brokering role foci the highest. Umpires hold legalist, trustee, and ombudsman role foci paramount, and strongly discount broker and policy-making foci. CEP researchers add "[a] distant echo of Image I—administration versus policy—may be detected here."⁴⁸ Image I conjures up the classic politics-administration dichotomy found in turn-of-the-century progressivist and reformist rhetoric.

Interestingly, Aberbach and his colleagues fail to recognize the relevance of Image IV on the umpire/player dimension. Image IV is labelled a "pure hybrid" in which "the position of the higher civil [servant] and the lines between political and career appointments have become...complex and uncertain."⁴⁹ This complexity is summed up in the idea that Image IV officialdom represents the "bureaucratization of politics and the politicization of bureaucracy."⁵⁰ Although CEP researchers acknowledge that administrators are found at both ends of the continuum, they immediately abandon the idea by citing the Image I parallel—an image relevant in cases where administrators conform to the umpire role. That is, bureaucrats found on the *player* end of the continuum are forgotten. Image IV, with its special mix of broker and policy-maker traits, seems especially relevant to this cohort. Indeed, among the archetypes of the Image IV bureaucrat are Colin Campbell and George Szablowski's Canadian super-bureaucrats.⁵¹ By Campbell's account, these officials are deeply involved in policy-making and

⁴⁷ Ibid., 88.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 88.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 18.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 19.

⁵¹ Ibid., p.18.

administrative brokering activities.⁵² Campbell observes that at the ADM level many are politicized.⁵³

These three dimensions make it clear that there is a range of policy roles reserved for executive bureaucrats. More particularly, policy advisory roles need not be restricted to Image III policy advocacy, which is often the case. They can be manifested in Image II technical form, or as Image I adjudication, or in the Image IV hybrid.

If these findings are extended to Alberta ADMs, it can be presumed that ADM policy orientations fall into four general cohorts: (1) a legalist-trustee orientation which is perhaps best described as a regulator role, and which is typified by Image I; (2) those who take a largely technical and supportive role in the policy-making process, which involves focusing on solving technical policy problems and applying specialized knowledge—this cohort is typified by Image II; (3) those who are active in policy making but do so in the interest of maintaining an equilibrium among groups and organized clienteles within the political system—this cohort is best typified by Image III; and (4) a cohort in which the ADM assumes an active role in policy making and brokering interests. This role most readily conforms to Image IV, and is distinguished from Image III by the official's direct participation in defining the existing "parallelogram" of political forces.

It can also be presumed upon extending CEP findings to Alberta ADMs that they will not perform policy roles epitomized by the "politics" focus of the politics/techniques dimension, or perform policy roles modelled by the responsiveness focus of the

⁵² See Colin Campbell, "The Search for Coordination and Control: When and How Are Central Agencies the Answer?" in *Organizing Governance, Governing Organizations*, ed. Colin Campbell and B. Guy Peters (Pittsburgh, Penn.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), 55–75.

⁵³ Speaking generally about the upper echelons of the Canadian public service, Campbell states that bureaucrats actively participate in the policy-making process, and are often advanced to senior posts in the light of political considerations. Specifically, "advancement to all deputy minister and many assistant deputy minister posts involves political considerations that, though of the relatively invisible executive bureaucratic variety, place a premium on candidates who have caught the prime minister's eye and have demonstrated an ability to work well in collective decision-making forums." *Ibid.*, 71.

authority/responsiveness continuum. The politics focus features partisan, advocate, ombudsman, and facilitator orientations. Constituency politicians are perhaps the best representatives of this species, although the above traits presumably extend to most politicians. The responsiveness focus of the authority/responsiveness continuum is more difficult to assign solely to politicians. The facilitator role looms large in this orientation, and to a slightly lesser extent so does the ombudsman role. More notably, legalist, broker, trustee, and policy-maker roles are antithetical. The essence of the orientation might be uncharitably labelled "fixer," which implies that the focus of activity is narrowly defined as serving needs—possibly of a partisan character—within the system of rules. The fixer's purpose is to use rules and procedures wisely on behalf of external clients. Unlike the broker, the fixer makes no effort to accommodate the requirements of multiple competing parties, nor is there any indication that the fixer seeks to generate new policy to effect solutions. The range of prospective role foci is summarized in suppositional form as follows:

Proposition 6/Corollary 4: Principal Policy Role Foci

Within the ADM cohort, there is a range of policy role orientations which are typified by Comparative Elite Project images I–IV.

CEP researchers also developed a number of role traits from their interviews with senior civil servants. These are listed in rank order by percentage in table 3-1.⁵⁴ The traits are interesting because they place policy-related activities in perspective. Table 3-1 rankings are consistent with the traditional public administration literature's portrayals of the neutral and technically competent senior civil servant. Officialdom concerns itself with managing the organization, problem solving, policy making, technical input, ethical and neutral execution of official responsibilities, and advising and counseling.

⁵⁴ Derived from table 4-4, "Mentions and Rank Orders of Traits Accorded to the Role of a Senior Civil Servant," in Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 104.

Table 3-1.—Traits Accorded by Bureaucrats to the Role of a Senior Civil Servant

Traits	Percentage mentioning	Deviation from mean percentage across traits	Rank
Organizational and managerial	72	+29	1
Intellectual	69	+26	2
Policy-making	59	+15	3
Technical	50	+7	4
Neutral execution	48	+5	5
Character and conscience	48	+5	5
Advising and counseling	44	+1	7
Sociability and personal relations	44	+1	7
Mediating, bargaining, and conciliating	32	-11	9
Representation and responsiveness	17	-26	10
Ideological and advocacy	16	-27	11
Charisma and leadership	14	-29	12
Mean percentage across traits	43		

Table 3-1 findings point to the relative importance of management and policy traits within the CEP sample. Organizational and managerial traits, along with intellectual traits, are mentioned by a noticeably higher percentage of respondents than advising and counseling, technical administration, neutral execution of responsibilities, character and conscience traits, or even policy making. As the focus of their analysis is on policy making, Aberbach et al. do not delve into managerial orientations in the interviews, which is to say they omit the most significant self-ascribed features of the bureaucrat's work. However, CEP researchers are aware of the importance of management, for they

note that in the 1980s, with the waning prosperity of Western nations, premiums were placed on bureaucrats' managerial competence and ability to carry out prudent analysis.⁵⁵ Thus, while the authors focus on Western democratic nations' bureaucratic involvement in policy making and political brokering, it is also clear that they consider organizational management and intellectual skills to be significant.⁵⁶ This point provides an important new dimension to Proposition 1, as it suggests a primacy for organizational managerial skills while not diminishing the significance of policy making and policy advising. The idea is captured in Proposition 1/Corollary 1.

Proposition 1/Corollary 1: Relative Significance of Policy and Administration Tasks

While both management- and policy-related tasks are of key importance to the ADM job, management tasks have greater significance.

Table 3-1 findings on "below norm" traits are also of interest. Despite the emphasis placed on leadership in the Alberta and federal government profiles, few bureaucrats list leadership as a key trait. It could be that leadership is extolled in the Alberta and federal public services but not practised and thus the CEP data expose a myth. Alternatively, it might be that leadership has become important in public management in the interval between when the study was done and the present. Alternatively, it could be that there are significant differences between the way public administration is practised in Canada and abroad. Lastly, there is the possibility that respondents believe leadership entails political initiative. In this instance bureaucrats were certain to rate the item near the bottom of their list for purposes of pretence if nothing else.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 113-14.

⁵⁶ According to Campbell, the significance accorded managerial skills is especially high in Canada and the United States. See "The Search for Coordination and Control," 71.

These vagaries prevent reading too much into CEP findings concerning the significance of managerial leadership among CEP bureaucrats, much less extracting lessons for this study. What can be said is that the ambiguity does not detract from Proposition 3 and its corollaries.

Representation and responsiveness traits which are associated with the politician and fixer roles are rated by CEP respondents as having little importance. The same is true of ideological and advocacy traits that are central to a politically focused role. Thus, they are not assumed to be prominent.

Mediation, bargaining, and conciliation, which are traits that appear to be at the core of the Image III notion, are not mentioned by many bureaucrats as being central traits of their work. By contrast, the policy-making trait enjoys considerable importance and is central to the Image II concept. The implication of policy making's importance in league with that of the neutral executive (which is also a significant trait in the Image III model), is that a notable portion of CEP bureaucrats operate in the Image III mode. The high importance rating for the organizational and managerial trait, technical competence, and neutral execution suggest that Image I and Image II orientations may even be more prevalent than Image III ones.

Data in table 3-1 statistics alone are not pronounced enough to postulate hypothetical ordinal relationships of Comparative Elite Project images. However, if the prominent traits of the archetypes are considered in the light of the chapter 2 discussion of the Tories' determination to separate politics and administration, it is reasonable to hypothesize an ordinal relationship in which Image II and Image I orientations are more prevalent among Alberta ADMs than those of Image III and Image IV. Proposition 6/Corollary 4 is thus amended:

Proposition 6/Corollary 4: Principal Policy Role Foci

Within the ADM cohort, there is a range of policy role orientations which are typified by Comparative Elite Project images I-IV. Among these images, I and II are more prevalent than III and IV.

If correct, the significance of this corollary is that the Alberta public service is traditionally oriented and quiescent.

(2) Corson and Paul, *Men Near the Top* (1966)

Corson and Paul make several generalizations concerning the American federal management experience. First, they observe that management in the federal service is integrally and inextricably related to an understanding of the objectives of the program being managed. They estimate that four out of five activities involve "substantive," as opposed to "administrative," considerations. This point is important to the authors, as they take the position that program management cannot be conducted without a knowledge of circumstance and technique.

Second, they observe that management is substantially an entrepreneurial function involving continual innovation which includes effecting changes in legislation, policy, and process. The authors state:

The entrepreneurial function of the career program manager is that of having his staff develop the change that is in the public interest and then of engineering the consensus required—among staff, the representatives of other executive departments, the Executive Office, constituent groups, and congressional committees, or such groups as are required in a particular instance.⁵⁷

Third, they discuss a higher public management with a continual interaction of groups within and outside the agency attempting to mould program objectives. Corson and Paul describe the entrepreneurialism of their top officials as involving superiors,

⁵⁷ Corson and Paul, *Men Near the Top*, 47.

subordinates, peers, advisory and supporting specialists, members of Congress, and representatives of special interest groups.

The fourth generalization is that higher management involves a process of negotiation and persuasion, and only partially is concerned with command. Corson and Paul's fifth generalization is that management is primarily a group process and as a consequence seldom involves a powerful individual working alone. Although this observation is consistent with the generalizations cited above, it is also distinctive and new in focusing on the energy and time that officials spend relating to others. The corollary to this is that the senior official "has relatively little time to focus his talents and experience alone on the problems for which he is responsible, little time to read, to write, and to deliberate."⁵⁸ In short, high officials interact frequently with a wide range of other officials but have little time to produce documents and research personally, and to deliberate on matters. Thus the executive's work is disjointed, and involves consuming information produced elsewhere in the organization.⁵⁹

Corson and Paul's last generalization is that being able to communicate is the most significant skill that a public service executive can possess. This point is confirmed by the federal profile that requires ADMs to proselytize a vision and move information throughout the system in a manner easily understood. It is worth repeating that Osbaldeston also holds this view of the ADM.

Much in Corson and Paul's generalizations is contained in existing propositions. However, important new insights also emerge. The second generalization addressing entrepreneurialism and the third and fourth highlighting continual interaction,

⁵⁸ Ibid., 49.

⁵⁹ See Martha Larsen Hale, "A Structured Observation Study of the Nature of City Manager's Work" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1983). Hale observes that city managers are rarely at rest, rarely have time to produce written documents, and are rarely alone.

negotiation, and persuasion are largely captured by Proposition 5/Corollary 2, which declares ADMs responsible for promoting messages, products, and services to all points of the organizational compass. These generalizations also imply leadership responsibilities defined in Proposition 2 and, generally, in its third corollary.

Corson and Paul's assertion that the ability to communicate is the most important skill possessed by a senior administrator is not fully captured in the study propositions, although the general importance of communication is acknowledged in Proposition 5. Since the literature indicates that the ability to communicate effectively is a central feature of executive work, Proposition 5 is amended:

Proposition 5: Communication

The ability to communicate effectively is the most significant skill ADMs possess, as they communicate with many system actors in the normal course of their work.

The fifth generalization is novel and merits a new corollary:

Proposition 3/Corollary 2: Executive Management as a Group Process

Executive management is a group process that requires ADMs to work closely with others.

Another new corollary is contained within Corson and Paul's fifth generalization. It reflects their observation of the near frenetic character of higher administration and, more importantly, the lack of time available to produce documents, personally research matters, and deliberate at length on many items.

Proposition 4/Corollary 4: ADMs as Consumers of Ideas and Proposals

ADMs have little time to produce documents personally, research matters, and deliberate. They are largely consumers of documents, research findings, and proposals generated elsewhere in the organization.

To the extent that these observations apply to Alberta ADMs, Corson and Paul's implications are significant. The nature of their work may involve less "doing" than implied in the deputy ministerial literature and more overseeing and gatekeeping. The

ADM job may have at its core features that are similar to those found within the deputy minister job insofar as ADMs too are essentially consumers and processors of proposals. The importance of communication skills and judgement, the requirement to concentrate on long-term plans, and the requirement to fashion systems of control and oversight all indicate the ADM is a consumer of proposals and overseer of administration. This is acknowledged in Proposition 5/Corollary 3, which states that ADMs supervise subordinates. It gains an additional increment of plausibility if they are conceived of as overseers of administrative action.

The notion that executive level management is essentially "substantive" is controversial, as contrary literature argues that executive management is fundamentally "generic" and administrators in high position shed much of their initial training and expertise as they move up the hierarchical ladder.⁶⁰ A muted counterpoint is found in the CEP list of traits, wherein "technical" knowledge is regarded as important by half the respondents. However, only half the respondents describe professional knowledge as a significant contributing factor in their jobs.

⁶⁰ Most students of administration concede that substantive knowledge of an enterprise (an area of operation) is important to success in executive positions. Plumptre opines: "There is much to be said for broadening the experience of individuals as they move up the management hierarchy; but there is a point at which the systematic enlargement of a person's experience deteriorates into a sort of crazy quilt, devoid of pattern or logic.... Policy competence is certainly improved through exposure to a variety of experiences and policy fields. This makes an official sensitive to the many different interests at play in government, widens thinking, and provides better insights into the subtleties of the bureaucracy. However, this sensitivity should be combined with sound knowledge of the substance of one or two policy fields, and the administrative problems associated with running departmental operations." *Beyond the Bottom Line*, 383-84.

The debate is by no means settled, since at a certain level in governmental organizations it must be determined what suffices as substantive knowledge. As Savoie states, "Management in the federal government is mostly one of process rather than substance. That is, managers are confronted by a myriad of complex government procedures and regulations which, many claim, makes it virtually impossible to manage effectively. Some suggest that it is only the process, not management authority, that is delegated to them; that is, management accountability is based on how well the process is respected, rather than on results." *The Politics of Public Spending*, 227.

Under these circumstances it is possible to see how substantive knowledge might not be as valued as process knowledge, and how process knowledge in itself might be regarded as substantive.

In the absence of any guidance in the Alberta literature, and given Proposition 6/Corollary 4, which presumes a technical-administrative focus in many ADM policy formulations, it is assumed that substantive knowledge is important to job performance. The point is formally declared below:

Proposition 3/Corollary 3: Substantive Knowledge

Command of technical knowledge in the policy and administrative areas over which ADMs have responsibility is essential to competent job performance.

Corson and Paul note the differences among their three cohorts on work orientation. On five counts they distinguish supporting staff managers from managers of programs (who are best characterized by the six generalizations previously cited). Supporting staff managers are distinguished by their utilization of knowledge (knowledge which is particular to government, or to the operation of a particular government) gained from experience in a specialized field of public management. While program managers possess knowledge about technology that is central to the operation of their organization,⁶¹ supporting staff managers possess knowledge central to the operation of the governmental administration.

The second, third, and fourth distinguishing features of the supporting staff manager cohort are difficult to separate. Corson and Paul observe that with a few exceptions these managers are mislabeled as "staff" in the sense that staff officials are adjutants to the program manager. However, while supporting staff managers acknowledge responsibility to the program manager, they also view themselves as agents of a government function (e.g., personnel, fiscal and budget management, or purchasing). Moreover, at least part of their job involves exercising control over program managers

⁶¹ Charles Perrow asks, "What really is the core technology of an organization?" The point is raised in the light of certain technological determinism which is found in organizational analysis literature attempting to link structure and technological elements. See Charles Perrow, *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*, 2d ed. (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1979), 160-67, especially 164-65.

using centrally published guidelines and professional codes as references. Thus Corson and Paul's supporting staff managers possess either real or self-perceived independent responsibilities for maintaining corporate standards. This raises the question as to whether ADM level officials in the Alberta government are similarly oriented. If so, the accountability perspectives of these officials may be different from those of program managers.

The fifth distinguishing feature is a logical consequence of the initial four. Other managers look to supporting staff managers for advice regarding the position of the agency on whose views and rulings they are expert. Supporting staff managers advise whether proposed action will be accepted or approved by the agency. Corson and Paul posit that through their knowledge of system rules and procedures, and with their links to central agencies, supporting staff managers often assume positions of control.⁶²

Corson and Paul list six distinctive aspects of the top-level professional's role. First, these officials owe allegiance to their professional disciplines, and as a result there can be conflicts of allegiance with the bureaucratic organization. Second, the professional expects, and is expected, to devote substantial time and energy to developing and maintaining professional knowledge. Third, the professional enjoys relatively independent status in the organization, and therefore has considerable freedom of action. Fourth, despite enjoying considerable independence, the professional is nonetheless integrally associated with the organization's programs and objectives. Fifth, although the professional orientation remains demonstrable, the top professional is under special obligation to communicate effectively to lay persons and professionals of other disciplines within and outside the organization. Finally, the manager must manage others in the same or related professional disciplines. Corson and Paul observe that managing in

⁶² Corson and Paul, *Men Near the Top*, 75.

this context is typified by collegial relations, loose supervision, and a focus on substantive issues. The professional character of subordinate staff contributes to this demeanor, as does the supervision of a relatively small staff.⁶³

Another set of observations made by Corson and Paul touches on differences in these cohorts' responsibilities to superiors, subordinates, peers, and constituents. As relationships with these actors are featured in this study, the researchers' observations are of interest, particularly since few other studies systematically explore them.

Corson and Paul define three interrelated but distinguishable types of relationships between program managers and their superiors. They are advisor, administrator, and ambassador. In the advisor role much of the program manager's time is taken up in conferences with the boss, meetings with his or her staff, and meetings involving superiors and others outside the agency.⁶⁴ Through frequent informal meetings and formal staff conferences, the program manager offers superiors not only his or her own opinions and advice, but also the considered proposals, analyses, and opinions of the staff. Corson and Paul add that program managers who enjoy this type of working relationship exercise personal influence and bring staff work to bear on problems that often are beyond their immediate formal areas of concern.

The program manager as administrator is much less upwardly focused and presumably less influential. Corson and Paul describe this orientation as one in which the manager devotes considerable time to ensuring that subordinates are effectively selected, trained, and supervised, and that funds are properly spent, and materiel and resources properly supplied and managed. Their preponderant emphasis is on ensuring the efficient,

⁶³ See Corson and Paul, *Men Near the Top*, 77-102, for a discussion of the professional at the top of the federal service.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

economic, and timely operation of their staffs. Program managers working in this mode are less corporately oriented, as they focus heavily on continually building and improving the organizations under their charge. Presumably they have less contact with their superior, as they are oriented "downward and inward," are less concerned about corporate matters, and do not actively advise their superior.

"Ambassador" program managers are held responsible by the superior for maintaining harmonious relations with governmental agencies, special interest groups, and with legislators through contacts with individual members and representations to committees.

Commentary on supporting staff managers' relations with their superiors is sparse and equivocal. The essence of Corson and Paul's portrayal is that these managers view their responsibilities according to their distance from the throne, which is the central agency and the locus of the supporting staff manager's profession, and from which the manager takes cues. This distance is either psychological or defined by the degree of accountability existing between the central agency and departmentally situated supporting staff managers.

Role ambiguity and conflicts of organizational loyalties are ripe in these circumstances. While supporting staff managers are employed by line agencies, Corson and Paul observe that "the positions held by most supporting staff managers at [the] upper levels are the culmination of career-long efforts to advance in a particular kind of activity...."⁶⁵ Moreover, these managers look to central agencies which are the "keepers" of their government profession for criticism and guidance, approval and support.⁶⁶ Under these circumstances, conflicts and ambiguity are hardly surprising. Presumably the

⁶⁵ Ibid., 60.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 69.

conflicts and ambiguity have a bearing on relations with departmental superiors who must deal with these potentially troubling situations.

Managers of professionals are given considerable freedom to carry out their work. Consequently, relationships with superiors are loosely defined subject to minimal hierarchical protocols. At the same time there is a need to keep superiors informed and a need to remain sensitive to the requirements of the superior, agency, and administration. Corson and Paul note that these various requirements are met through more or less continuous exchanges of information.⁶⁷

Program managers are described as being "engaged in a continual effort with their subordinates in planning, periodically taking stock of accomplishments, in approving methods and procedures, and thus in gaining concurrence on improvements."⁶⁸ Moreover, program managers actively negotiate with superiors on behalf of their subordinates for funds, staff, space, and supplies. They are charged with communicating to staff new policies and programs announced by superiors, and for "aiding staff to understand and to accept the new policies and programs."⁶⁹ Responsibilities for making policy operative mean keeping in touch with staff "to ensure that policies are being carried out and to know when...to redirect staff efforts or adjust originally stated objectives."⁷⁰

Program managers must provide leadership, which at this level involves lobbying for resources, engaging staff, making program adjustments, and equipping staff to handle challenges they will confront as new organizational directions are charted. Corson and

⁶⁷ Ibid., 87.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 30.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 31.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 32.

Paul emphasize that the program manager is deeply involved in the grit and grime of problem solving, an activity that promotes constant contact with subordinate staff. Importantly, it is program managers who usually present recommendations to their superiors on program changes, improvement of methods and procedures, and other innovations.

Supporting staff managers possess all the responsibilities for subordinates listed for program managers but hold an additional obligation involving representing and selling the subordinate staff's ideas and recommendations. Selling and representation are necessary because of the supporting staff's requirement to secure acceptance of its recommendations by others. Acceptance, which must be obtained by agency program manager peers and the boss, depends in part on the supporting staff manager's ability to sell recommendations, as well as the need for the supporting staff organization's services. By Corson and Paul's estimate, "in day-by-day practice the supporting staff manager spends perhaps another eighth of his working time in dealing with others as the voice of his subordinates."⁷¹

Managers of professionals nominally supervise fewer staff and therefore spend less time than other managers attending to staff needs. The professional character of subordinates and the nature of their work also lessens the need for supervision. According to Corson and Paul, supervision of professionals is characterized by two distinctive aspects: (1) it is preponderantly focused on matters dealing with substantive knowledge and (2) it is characterized by a very loose rein.

Relationships with peers in other departmental divisions, and more extensively across the governmental system, differ according to managerial function. Supporting staff managers readily engage departmental peers for reasons already described. They are also

⁷¹ Ibid., 65.

sought out for their counsel, given their insights and knowledge concerning central agency policies.

Program managers are presumably less active in initiating and receiving peer communications, yet Corson and Paul leave no question that communication is an important feature of the job. To be effective, the program manager must "persuade peers with whom he deals that his interests and program are legitimate and that there is a mutuality of interests among those involved. He must maneuver well with equally powerful and capable managers outside the agency on grounds that are often precarious and shifting."⁷² Peer relations also involve responding to requests for help and advice. Many managers readily respond to these requests. In part, they respond for the prestige and "IOUs" they bring to the manager and program. Corson and Paul underscore the importance of program manager peer relationships:

Finally, he understands that, in these peer relationships, his effectiveness as a persuader, a negotiator, and a representative (rather than as a commander) determines his success.⁷³

Managers of professionals are less involved with these types of peer relationships but are not divorced from requirements to engage peers. Indeed, Corson and Paul observe that managers of professionals must actively deal with peers for the same reasons that apply to program managers. Where managers of professionals' peer relationships differ is in their ongoing contacts with members of their profession who are not in government. These lines of communication are open and active.

Finally, program managers are said to be accountable to not one but several constituencies. Constituents look to managers for information and advice on government policies and initiatives. They view the manager as a vital link between their interests and

⁷² Ibid., 36.

⁷³ Ibid., 38.

the bureaucracy. They reward program managers by supporting the program for articulating their interests within the bureaucracy. For their part, program managers seek close relations with constituents for the important informational links that they supply, and for the support constituents can provide the program and agency.

Supporting staff managers' constituents are the central agencies to which the functional specialists naturally and formally relate, and from which they receive criticism and guidance, approval and support. Corson and Paul's analysis implies that supporting staff managers do not possess constituents outside the government.

Propositions and corollaries formulated thus far have only touched on important differences that might exist between governmental executives as a result of functional orientations. Corson and Paul's work leads to such considerations. Proposition 9 captures the nominal logic of job functions affecting role differences. The proposition is ventured in the absence of distinctions made in the Alberta literature.

Proposition 9: Job Function Distinctions

Program managers, supporting staff managers, and managers of professional ADMs differ significantly in their performance of certain tasks, orientations to other system actors, and role conceptions.

The following corollaries are derived on the basis of Corson and Paul's descriptions of distinguishing cohort traits:

Proposition 9/Corollary 1: Distinguishing Characteristics of Supporting Staff Managers

Supporting staff managers are distinguished by:

- (a) formal responsibilities for exercising control over other principal managerial cohorts using dictates and perspectives defined by central administrative authorities.**
- (b) high frequency of contact with other principal managerial cohorts whose members seek advice on matters of central agency policies and preferences.**
- (c) divided accountabilities to departmental hierarchy and peer , and to central agencies and the standards of their governmental profession .**

Proposition 9/Corollary 2: Distinguishing Characteristics of Managers of Professionals

Managers of professionals are distinguished by:

- (a) a strong allegiance to their "first" or "principal" profession.**
- (b) requirement to balance organizational and professional perspectives.**
- (c) loose supervision from above.**
- (d) collegial and largely informal relationships with subordinates.**
- (e) strong substantive focus to interactions with subordinates.**
- (f) requirements to convert technical information and ideas developed within the organization into understandable form so they can be communicated within the system to nonprofessionals.**

Distinguishing features of program managers appear when responsibilities to superiors, subordinates, peers, and constituents are considered. These unique features are captured in Proposition 9/Corollary 3.

Proposition 9/Corollary 3: Distinguishing Characteristics of Program Managers

Program managers are distinguished by:

- (a) less active departmental peer consultation than supporting staff managers.**
- (b) less active liaison with members of their first profession than managers of professionals and supporting staff managers who claim a governmental profession.**
- (c) attention to managing constituent relationships.**
- (d) requirements for managing extra-agency relationships using persuasion, negotiation, and representation.**

Corson and Paul's analysis of managerial cohort characteristics provides support for addendums to established propositions and corollaries as well as the creation of new propositions. The advisor, administrator, and ambassador role distinctions among program managers stand as a useful complement to the comparative elite study findings on different role image types. Corson and Paul concede that advising, administration, and external orientations are all important to program management and therefore confirm

Proposition 6/Corollary 1. But in making the distinctions they also sustain the basic supposition found in Proposition 6/Corollary 4.

Characterizing the program manager: administrator role underscores the existence of Image I and Image II types, and implies that some program managers are more engaged in program administration than others. While the point is perhaps obvious, stating it underscores the lack of a formally defined supposition to this effect. Proposition 4/Corollary 5 is offered as a remedy.

Proposition 4/Corollary 5: Different Administrative Foci

ADMs differ in the importance they place on the practice of administration relative to policy advising and managing external relationships.

Some of the systematic and random effects that determine different orientations will be discussed below when considering the general management literature. Corson and Paul identify selected random effects such as a superior's confidence in an official's judgement to explain why certain managers advise more than others.

A penchant to engage external constituents could also be tied to these factors, although the literature presumes more systematic bases. Certainly one such distinguishing feature is found in Corson and Paul's description of managerial cohorts. Program managers have greater reason than supporting staff managers to liaise with extragovernmental constituents. Similarly, supporting staff managers have greater reason than program managers or managers of professionals to liaise within central agencies. These points, contained within the logic of Proposition 9 corollaries, are usefully stated with greater precision in separate corollaries.

Proposition 9/Corollary 4: Relating to External Constituents

Program managers and managers of professionals more readily communicate with extragovernmental actors than do supporting staff managers.

Proposition 9/Corollary 5: Relating to Central Agencies

Supporting staff managers more readily communicate with central agencies than do program managers and managers of professionals.

Nothing in Proposition 9/Corollary 4 necessarily obviates the supposition in Proposition 5/Corollary 3 stating that ADM subordinates carry the burden of extragovernmental relations.

Notions of corporate responsibilities found in Proposition 8 are confirmed by Corson and Paul. The exception is that program managers and supporting staff managers are identified to an even greater extent as having multiple accountabilities. Program managers' accountabilities are tied to their bureaucratic political relationships. Accountabilities of supporting staff managers are defined by their relationships with central administrative authorities.

Descriptions of the various cohorts' administrative, communication, and leadership characteristics add nothing substantial to what is summarized in Corson and Paul's initial six generalizations, which have been rationalized with the larger literature. Nevertheless, the importance of the entrepreneurial selling of programs and ideas that is highlighted in their detailed analysis of cohort activity should be noted. Corson and Paul emphasize the necessity for supporting staff managers to sell their ideas, but they also make it clear that the requirement extends to all administrator cohorts. Undoubtedly, this need to sell is one reason they claim communications skills are of paramount importance.

Discussion of Corson and Paul's research cannot be concluded without addressing three key points. First, while the imperative for supporting staff managers to sell their ideas and services is accepted, there is a logical inconsistency with the claim that these officials are also the most likely to exercise control over others. Presumably some staff managers are "controllers" and others are entrepreneurial "hustlers." No hints are given as to the basis for these different manifestations. Second, in the broadest terms Corson

and Paul define three principal "other actor" orientations. One orientation has officials focused largely on the workings of their organization—downward. Program managers as administrators typify this orientation. A second orientation has officials oriented toward the administrative and political centre of government. Presumably this group includes many supporting staff managers and program managers who are heavily involved in advising. This is an upward orientation. Third is an external orientation that has officials relating horizontally across agency and governmental boundaries. Nominally this group would include program managers who are "ambassadors" and perhaps managers of professionals who actively engage their professional peers who are employed outside government. These principal orientations are codified in Proposition 5/Corollary 5.

Proposition 5/Corollary 5: Principal Liaison Orientations

ADMs are differentiated on liaison orientation dimensions:

- downward into their line organization.
- upward toward the administrative and political centres of government.
- horizontally and outward toward officials in departments that are not central agencies.
- toward extra-organizational constituents.

(3) General Manager Literature: Berg (1984) and Kotter (1982)

Literature on general management recognizes that the character of management differs at various levels of the bureaucratic hierarchy. *General management* is management in which:

The critical characteristics of the position are a responsibility for the overall performance of the organization and reasonable control over the inputs needed to provide the product or service.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Norman A. Berg, *General Management: An Analytical Approach* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard Irwin, 1984), 3.

Inasmuch as the literature addresses management activities at the highest levels of bureaucratic organizations, one can also expect insights into the managerial character of the ADM position. Norman A. Berg lists five categories of responsibilities which typify the broad practice of general management. They are:

- to establish long-term objectives
- to develop supporting plans that will contribute to the accomplishment of the overall objectives selected
- to be responsible for the resolution of the conflicts that arise and trade-offs that must be made in many activities of the organization
- to be the leader of the organization and therefore responsible for the selection, development, motivation, and fair treatment of its members
- to be responsible for the overall performance of the organization, and in this regard be responsible for setting and enforcing the standards of performance necessary to achieve objectives, and "to see to it that the major activities of strategy formulation and implementation combine to create a strategy and a culture that lead to good performance."⁷⁵

Leadership is an especially important aspect of the job, with the general manager being concerned about "the *process* by which decisions are made as opposed to the *substance* of those decisions."⁷⁶ Berg cites five general areas of action necessary to lead an organization: (1) define responsibilities and establish reporting relationships; (2) develop systems for the collection, flow, and presentation of information about the organization; (3) develop an incentive system; (4) allocate resources to promote the objectives of the organization; and (5) provide leadership by adopting behaviour that

⁷⁵ Ibid., 6-7.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 105.

stimulates members' desires and abilities to work toward the accomplishment of the organization's goals.⁷⁷ Berg also observes that general management involves "a whole set of responsibilities to external constituencies as well as to...[the] organization."⁷⁸

John P. Kotter develops an epistemological strategy in which general manager jobs are viewed in terms of responsibilities and relationships—a strategy similar to that used by Corson and Paul. Following is an overview of Kotter's perspective on the essential features of general management practices:⁷⁹

- Key Problem/Challenge #1: Setting basic goals, policies, and strategies despite great uncertainties.
- Key Problem/Challenge #2: Achieving a delicate balance in the allocation of scarce resources among a diverse set of functional and business needs. Not allowing short-run concerns to dominate long-run ones, or marketing issues to stifle production needs.
- Key Problem/Challenge #3: Keeping on top of a very large and diverse set of activities. Being able to identify problems ("fires") that are out of control and to solve them quickly.
- Key Problem/Challenge #4: Getting from bosses the information, cooperation, and support needed to do the job. Being demanding with superiors without being perceived as uncooperative.
- Key Problem/Challenge #5: Getting corporate staff, other relevant departments or divisions, and important external groups (e.g., big unions or

⁷⁷ Ibid., 91.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁷⁹ John Kotter, *The General Managers* (New York: Free Press, 1982).

customers or suppliers) to cooperate despite the lack of any formal authority over them; getting things done through them despite resistance.

- Key Problem/Challenge #6: Motivating and controlling a large and diverse group of subordinates. Dealing with inadequate performance, interdepartmental conflict, and the like.

Many of Kotter's challenges are analogous to Berg's "responsibilities." Kotter, like Berg, highlights the importance of establishing strategic direction, making resource allocation decisions, leading and motivating staff, and developing systems to carry out plans and move in strategic directions. All of the challenges and responsibilities listed by Berg and Kotter can be classified within existing propositions and corollaries.

Kotter's unique contribution is his discussion of the influence of organizational variables on general management practices. These variables include hierarchy, organizational size, organizational age, and organizational performance. Kotter observes that as one descends the hierarchy of large organizations, general management jobs tend to be less focused on long-run issues and more on short-run and internal relations.⁸⁰

Differences in administrative practice owing to hierarchical placement are acknowledged in chapter commentary and tangentially in formal suppositions.⁸¹

Acknowledging the antecedents to Kotter's observations, the broad notion is codified as Proposition 1/Corollary 2.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 26–27.

⁸¹ Distinctions between operationally defined Alberta ADMs and EM I subordinates are noted in the review of the Alberta literature but not codified. The leitmotif of the federal profile is unquestionably one of hierarchical differentiation. Indeed, a complete hypothesis of hierarchical differences should include distinctions on all counts listed in Appendix C. Practical limits of this study prohibit this listing. Deputy ministerial literature portrays fundamental differences between deputy ministers and subordinates. This stands as testimony to differences of hierarchy even though the DM literature is unmindful of differences that exist below the deputy head level. The comparative elite project commentary reveals important hierarchical differences that will be reported in a following chapter. Corollaries 2–4 of Proposition 4 provide further evidence of hierarchical effects. Suppositions defining differences in judgement quotients and orientations to external actors support the significance of a hierarchical effect.

Proposition 1/Corollary 2: The Hierarchical Effect

An official's placement within the organizational hierarchy affects the nature of tasks performed, with the consequence that the higher an official's hierarchical station the greater the job's strategic focus and intellectual abstraction.

Similarly, Kotter comments that under most circumstances the larger the organization, the bigger the job. That is, general management jobs in larger organizations tend

to be more demanding overall than were jobs in smaller contexts...job responsibilities were made more complex by the sheer volume of issues, decisions, and activities; hence decision making was more difficult...furthermore, job-related relationships were usually much more numerous, and getting things done through others much more difficult.⁸²

While Kotter acknowledges the complexity of the relationship between size and functional orientation, nevertheless, he finds that size affects function.⁸³ He writes that size influences management practice by altering the "informational environment." With increases in size the quality of information diminishes and it becomes more difficult to obtain detailed information on activities within the organization. Decision making and resource allocations become more difficult and abstract, and general managers have to rely heavily upon proxy measures and systems to control and coordinate organizational initiative. Kotter also observes that increased size affects the human environment. In larger organizations relationships become more adversarial owing to the proliferation of specialist staff groups and the inability of managers to deal with large and small problems on a face-to-face basis. Thus, presumably, the observer can expect to find general

⁸² Kotter, *The General Manager*, 28.

⁸³ See Pitt and Smith's discussion of the effect of size on organizational complexity. They argue that size alone does not promote more difficult or more complex organizational structures. Complexity is particularly tied to variety. The extent to which this observation can be extended to the job level is not clear, for increased organizational size does make a job bigger and to the extent that the manager must deal with more "moving parts" it would seem logical to conclude that the effect of size and the challenges of a job are correlated in some fashion. See D. C. Pitt and B. C. Smith, *Government Departments: An Organizational Perspective* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 63.

managers in large organizations devoting greater proportions of their time to conflict resolution than their counterparts in smaller ones.

Kotter's observations about the influence of organizational size are captured in Proposition 1/Corollary 3.

Proposition 1/Corollary 3: The Size Effect

ADM job orientations differ as a function of organizational size. ADMs managing larger organizations devote greater energies to:

- (a) dealing with the volume of issues, decisions, and activities generated in the organization.
- (b) interacting with greater numbers of system actors.
- (c) managing conflicts and frictions among system actors.
- (d) managing through abstract control systems and through layers of intermediaries.

Of importance is the incompleteness of Kotter's discussion of organizational size influences. Specifically, he fails to distinguish between the size effect of the organization in which the manager works (the department or agency), and that of the organization the manager runs. It is assumed size effects are the same, although other assumptions can be ventured.

Kotter points out that the character and style of a general manager's immediate superior affect the manager's administrative demeanor; a superior's competence, abrasiveness, and the reasonableness of expectations all have a bearing on job demands.⁸⁴ These notions are initially raised when reviewing Corson and Paul, and are typified as random factors contributing to the propensity for program managers to offer policy advice. Kotter's observation suggests that the superior's demeanour has considerably broader ramifications. The point is captured in Proposition 1/Corollary 4.

⁸⁴ Kotter, *The General Managers*, 30.

Proposition 1/Corollary 4: Supervisory Style

The deputy minister's competence, abrasiveness, and expectations have a direct bearing on the ADM's task orientations.

Kotter also observes that management work is characterized by continual contact with subordinates and superordinates and that the daily routine usually involves highly fragmented episodic behaviour.⁸⁵ These points correspond directly to Proposition 3/Corollary 2 (Executive Management as a Group Process), and the core idea contained within Proposition 4/Corollary 4 (ADMs as Consumers of Ideas and Proposals).

Limits of Applicability of the General Management Literature

The congruence between the general management and public administration literature suggests it is useful to conceive of ADMs as general managers and to investigate their role with attention to the particulars of general management. Yet, care needs to be taken since there are functions in the public administration and general management literature that take on a qualitatively different character when considered within the public sector context. The most obvious is that of relationships with extra-organizational constituencies which Kotter and Berg portray as being important. Within the public sector these relationships have different qualities than those found within the nongovernmental sectors.

First, while it is possible to discover private sector managers whose extra-organizational relationships are adjudicative and regulatory in nature (e.g., the relationship that bankers and lenders have with clients), relations between private sector

⁸⁵ Ibid., 89.

managers and those external to their organizations do not exhibit the same level of "policing" inherent in many government managers' external relationships.⁸⁶

Second, there is a political character to much of government business that is not found in private sector management. Senior public executives must take care not to excite private and public passions in extra-organizational relationships, and must labour to sustain consensus and an equilibrium between external parties and the organization. There is a need for private sector managers to placate external agents by balancing interests (e.g., those of big unions, customers, and suppliers), yet the fundamental purpose is to bring these groups into line so that the organization's agenda can be implemented. Osbaldeston writes that deputy ministers manage the environment to a similar end, but beyond this there is a requirement in government administration to maintain relationships for the purpose of *sustaining* them. Legislation and partisan politics dictate this behaviour and as a consequence the context and texture of extra-organizational relationships in the government sector are likely to be different.

3.2. Key Attributes of ADM Work Summarized in an Analytical Framework

A literature review establishes that no single study fully covers the essential functions and tasks of the ADM job. Job descriptions and profiles prepared by the Alberta Personnel Administration Office and the federal Treasury Board Secretariat and Public Service Commission focus on the managerial and administrative skills required in ADM and executive work but fail to pay sufficient attention to the policy advisory role and the political context. The touchstone Alberta accounts are scanty. The federal profile is more complete but suffers from its managerial bias, as it conceives the ADM in decidedly more heroic terms than presumed in the Alberta context. There are areas of practice where

⁸⁶ The strong "umpire" and "authority" character found in much of public administration places extra-organizational relations on a different footing than is normally found in the private sector.

there are either discrepancies or gaps in the federal and Alberta descriptors. The deputy ministerial literature offers insights into ADM behaviour but is flawed by its focus on federal administration and by an inadvertent understating of the independence and initiative inherent in the ADM job. Deputy ministerial writing is also incomplete in its consideration of the ADM. The general manager literature ignores the political-administrative context of public administration. Aberbach and his Comparative Elite Project colleagues pay only passing attention to the general management side of their men near the top, although they note the importance of management and technical activities. Unfortunately, little attention is paid to specifics. Corson and Paul address the policy and administrative sides of higher public administration but the American bias in descriptions of extra-departmental actors limits the usefulness of their findings.

Osbaldeston's deputy minister study offers the best basis for framing an ADM job construct, given its conceptual completeness. Therefore, a construct of ADM work is organized in this study using functional categories closely resembling those developed by Osbaldeston. Specifically, the construct is composed of three functional elements: a policy advisory function, a collective management function, and a departmental management function. These elements are readily apparent in the final iteration of Proposition 1.

Policy Formulation and Advising

Minimally, inquiry into ADM advice-giving should seek to confirm Proposition 6 and its related corollaries.

Proposition 6: Policy Formulation

ADMs formulate policy proposals.

Proposition 6/Corollary 1: Offering Policy Advice

Advising the political executive, the minister, and the deputy minister is an important feature of the ADM job.

Proposition 6/Corollary 2: Political Content

When deputy ministers buffer ADMs and subordinate officials from the political domain, the content of ADM advice to the deputy minister and minister is preponderantly administrative in character.

Proposition 6/Corollary 3: Deputy as Gatekeeper of Ministerial Access

ADM contact with the minister and other members of the political executive is controlled by the deputy minister.

Proposition 6/Corollary 4: Principal Policy Role Foci

Within the ADM cohort, there is a range of policy role orientations which are typified by Comparative Elite Project images I-IV. Among these images, I and II are more prevalent than III and IV.

A distinction that is implicit in these suppositions concerns different types of policy advising activity. As mentioned in passing when discussing comparative elite study results, the policy advisory function involves devising formal policy recommendations to the deputy, minister, and government. It also involves less formal exchanges in which counsel is offered. On the strength of Proposition 6/Corollary 2, and as implied by companion corollaries 3 through 4, this counsel presumably focuses on administrative and technical matters. Insofar as ADMs also hold responsibilities for managing external relationships, the counsel presumably also addresses contextual matters.

Corporate and Collective Responsibilities

Proposition 8 and related corollaries which follow provide a basis for testing ADM corporate and collective manager responsibilities.

Proposition 8: Corporate Responsibilities

ADMs possess corporate responsibilities that extend beyond their immediate responsibilities to manage their line organization.

Proposition 8/Corollary 1: The Public Good and Corporate Responsibilities

Although ADMs possess important "corporate" responsibilities, they do not involve balancing conflicting demands from the political level, external interest groups, and the organization in order to serve a higher concept of the public good.

Proposition 8/Corollary 2: Collective Management Responsibilities

ADMs' collective management responsibilities are fundamentally different from those of deputy ministers, as they do not possess multiple accountabilities to political and administrative authorities.

Despite Corollary 2, it is important to note that multiple ADM accountabilities are acknowledged, and that these may even involve multiple administrative accountabilities as noted in Proposition 8. The point of distinction is that although ADMs have multiple accountabilities, they are not the same as those of deputy ministers. ADM collective management responsibilities qualitatively differ from those of deputy ministers in the absence of a broad stewardship charge. A more restrictive definition of collective management responsibility is implied in Proposition 8, which has ADMs working on behalf of the *departmental* collectivity, which includes serving both the deputy and the minister directly. The general responsibility is to the corporate entity of the department and not the government. Presumably in this context there is a charge of stewardship that falls to the ADM.

Departmental Management Responsibilities

Osbaldeston's discussion of departmental management responsibilities has the deputy functioning as the principal decision maker on recommendations to the minister, the core communicator, the leader of the senior executive team, and the manager of the

external environment. There is strong evidence that ADM level officials perform variants of these functions, although not in the same fashion as deputy ministers.

(1) Decision Maker on Recommendations to Superiors

It is not expected that ADMs are the principal decision makers for recommendations to the minister. However, within their organizational line it is probable that they are the principal decision maker concerning recommendations destined for the minister. The point is implied in Proposition 6/Corollary 1 (Offering Policy Advice), and supported by Proposition 3/Corollary 1 (Judgement). The federal profile implies "gatekeeping" behaviour by its reference to ADM requirements for "political acumen" in matters of organizational awareness. The deputy ministerial literature implies that ADMs share a stewardship responsibility with deputies for ministerial and departmental interests (i.e., the more limited notion of collective management responsibility). All of this suggests prerogatives for controlling the upward flow of information and ideas which provides a basis for supposition Proposition 6/Corollary 6.

Proposition 6/Corollary 6: ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice

Subordinate manager policy recommendations and counseling intended for the deputy minister and higher officialdom are controlled by ADMs.

(2) Core Divisional Communicator

Discussion of the deputy's role as an arbiter of ministerial communications is closely tied to that of the deputy being the departmental "core communication channel." It is unlikely that the ADM functions as *the* departmental core communicator. Nevertheless, the literature suggests that ADMs still have important communication responsibilities and presumably function as *the* primary communicators in the organizations they head.

Propositions and corollaries pertaining to ADM communication are listed under Proposition 5.

Proposition 5: Communication

The ability to communicate effectively is the most significant skill ADMs possess as they communicate with many system actors in the normal course of their work.

Proposition 5/Corollary 2: Essential Communication Tasks

Alberta ADMs:

- (a) capitalize on existing communication vehicles and create new ones to ensure effective internal and external communication.
- (b) promote the organization's messages, products, and services to other clients, higher level management, and subordinates in a purposeful and timely manner which gains and sustains their support.

Proposition 5/Corollary 3: Subordinates as Principal Agents of External Liaison

ADMs supervise subordinate executive managers who build and maintain alliances and networks of clients, colleagues, and interest groups inside and outside the organization.

Proposition 5/Corollary 4: ADM as Arbiter of Conflicts

ADMs actively manage organizational and extra-organizational conflicts to limit the deputy's burden.

Proposition 5/Corollary 5: Principal Liaison Orientations

ADMs are differentiated on liaison orientation dimensions:

- downward into their line organization.
- upward toward the administrative and political centres of government.
- horizontally and outward toward officials in departments that are not central agencies.
- toward extra-organizational constituents.

Other propositions that relate to ADM communications include:

Proposition 9/Corollary 4: Relating to External Constituents

Program managers and managers of professionals more readily communicate with extragovernmental actors than do supporting staff managers.

Proposition 9/Corollary 5: Relating to Central Agencies

Supporting staff managers more readily communicate with central agencies than do program managers and managers of professionals.

An important feature of ADM communications with other actors is tied to the entrepreneurialism first noted when reviewing Corson and Paul. ADMs are champions of organizational ideas and interests. This point is captured in Proposition 5/Corollary 2b. It is also the idea behind Proposition 9/Corollary 4 (Relating to External Constituents). In confirming these propositions the dimensions of the ADMs' role as core communication channel will be revealed.

(3) Organizational Leader

Suppositions that apply to Alberta leadership nominally include the following.

Proposition 2: Leadership—activities

In exercising leadership, ADMs assess subordinates' capacities, improve subordinates' potential through training and development assignments, delegate work, and negotiate with system actors to attain organizational objectives.

Proposition 2/Corollary 1: Leadership as Program Direction Setting

ADMs have greater responsibilities than subordinate executive managers in setting program direction.

Proposition 2/Corollary 3: Incremental Leadership

Organizational leadership exercised by ADMs involves:

- (a) positioning and reorienting the organization to meet emerging trends, and to achieve organizational and governmental objectives.
- (b) directing the organization's activities to align with the government's plans and priorities.
- (c) sustaining the organization's momentum towards accomplishing goals.
- (d) gaining and sustaining the interest and support of the subordinate executive management team for strategies which realize the vision and values of the organization.

Proposition 3: Leadership—attributes

As organizational leaders, ADMs exhibit flexibility, interpersonal sensitivity, initiative, tolerance to stress, and sensitivity to public and governmental needs.

Proposition 3/Corollary 1: Judgement

ADMs exercise an “extra quotient” of judgement pertaining to organizational and extra-organizational matters which distinguishes them from subordinate executive managers.

Proposition 3/Corollary 2: Executive Management as a Group Process

Executive management is a group process that requires ADMs to work closely with others.

Proposition 3/Corollary 3: Substantive Knowledge

Command of substantive technical knowledge in the policy and administrative areas over which ADMs have responsibility is essential for competent job performance.

Proposition 2/Corollary 2 deserves special attention, as it declares a formal distinction presumed to exist between Alberta and federal ADMs. Alberta ADMs are not assumed to exercise visionary administrative leadership, but to lead in the wake of deputy ministerial or even ministerial visions. In the presumed absence of visionary leadership, something more sedate is imagined, and this is best captured in Proposition 2/Corollary 3—derived from leadership responsibilities attributed to federal director generals.

Proposition 2 refines the presumed tasks by adding the following activities: assessing subordinate capacities, training and developing employees (which is necessary to meet new organizational challenges), and negotiating with other system actors.

Proposition 3 and related corollaries address leadership from the perspective of leadership attributes. The first corollary underscores the ADM's extra quotient of judgement. This observation may be especially important, as the application of judgement may well be the most important leadership trait exercised by Alberta ADMs. Application of judgement is not unique to the ADM—this much is established in the literature review.

What is arguably unique is that ADMs presumably add judgement to that exercised by their subordinates as a routine matter. Presumably ADMs are in a position to do this on the basis of their formal knowledge, experience, and position in the departmental and governmental information stream.

If Proposition 3/Corollary 3 (Substantive Knowledge) is taken at face value, ADMs presumably offer their quotient of judgement on substantive matters, as well as those concerning higher administrative and policy decisions. However, among these foci it seems logical that the ADM's unique contribution is to add perspectives that incorporate sensitivities to higher administrative and policy matters.

Proposition 3/Corollary 2 is not necessarily a supposition that directly addresses ADM leadership. It is construed as such because it raises the possibility that ADM leadership is fundamentally collective in its character. Although ADMs may provide the leadership focus within their divisions, subordinates working in concert with the ADM are the locus of divisional leadership. The previous discussion of collective management responsibility for departmental operations suggests the same logic operates at the departmental level. Deputy ministers presumably are the focus of departmental leadership, but the locus is contained within the close collectivity with which the deputy works.

Engendering "trust" is a feature of leadership activity that is implied in the literature but not captured in a proposition. It deserves attention, as it is assumed to be requisite for successful close working relationships, and for affecting tasks listed under Proposition 2 corollaries 3c and 3d. Proposition 2/Corollary 4 is proposed to ensure the idea is not lost.

Proposition 2/Corollary 4: Trust and Confidence

An essential task of ADM organizational leadership is to engender personal trust in the ADM and his or her judgement among members of the divisional

management team and department, and among others with whom the official must work closely.

A final aspect of leadership not addressed in the suppositions but deserving attention is the executive's fashioning of a top management team through recruitment to accomplish defined objectives. This feature of executive leadership is referenced in the general manager literature, but not in the public administration sources. The apparent discrepancy is of interest, for it is fully possible that "merit" and tenure provisions within the public sector prohibit the felicitous assembly of a management team. In the private sector this supposedly is not the case, as general managers are free to replace and recruit at will. This prohibition may explain references in the public administration literature concerning improving subordinates' potential through training and development assignments. Proposition 2/Corollary 5 reflects this notion.

Proposition 2/Corollary 5: Framing the Divisional Management Team

ADMs are limited in their ability to frame a management team to their liking, as they must work within restrictions of personnel administration legislation and regulations.

(4) Managing the External Environment

Various suppositions touch upon the ADM's responsibility for managing the external environment. Indeed, this aspect of ADM responsibilities is difficult to untangle from those already discussed dealing with collective responsibilities, communications, and organizational leadership. Among the propositions and corollaries that apply to this activity are the following, which are not stated as they have already been defined in this subsection:

- Proposition 5/Corollary 3: Subordinates as Principal Agents of External Liaison
- Proposition 5/Corollary 4: ADM as Arbiter of Conflicts

- Proposition 5/Corollary 5: Principal Liaison Orientations
- Proposition 8: Corporate Responsibilities
- Proposition 8/Corollary 1: The Public Good and Corporate Responsibilities
- Proposition 9/Corollary 4: Relating to External Constituents

Suffice it to say that there is considerable evidence that ADMs actively manage the external context and that they do so with divisional, deputy ministerial, and corporate objectives in mind.

Within the literature review it is claimed that nothing in Proposition 9/Corollary 4 obviates the supposition of Proposition 5/Corollary 3. Logically, this is accurate insofar as it remains plausible that the main burden of external relations is carried by subordinate officials. Under these circumstances ADMs could sustain active external contacts, perhaps even the most important ones, while overseeing the bulk of interactions that are conducted through subordinates. However, the weight of the suppositions strongly suggested that ADMs are deeply involved in external liaison activities. They may still supervise others who may have their own heavy burden of external relationships, but it seems likely that they do this while maintaining active relationships in which their participation is a crucial aspect. Under these circumstances it is less clear that the propositions fail to conflict.

(5) Executive Management

Osbaldeston's heuristic is weak in its description of the particulars of routine management. The lacuna is not surprising, as his focus is on the deputy minister, and he observes that deputies necessarily delegate management tasks. However, this very logic requires that attention be given to specifics of routine management.

Propositions and corollaries addressing routine management nominally include the following:

Proposition 4: Administration

ADMs plan, organize, delegate, and control the administration of their organization. Controlling entails the effective use of administrative controls for evaluation, auditing, and monitoring

Proposition 4/Corollary 1: Long-Range Plans

ADMs formulate long-range plans, whereas subordinate executive managers formulate medium-range plans.

Proposition 4/Corollary 2: Yearly Performance Objectives

Executive managers reporting to ADMs formulate yearly program performance objectives, whereas ADMs approve them.

Proposition 4/Corollary 3: Assessing Program Effectiveness

ADM responsibilities for assessing program effectiveness are significantly greater than those of subordinate executive managers. To fulfill these responsibilities ADMs establish and maintain accountability systems which review activities and goals relative to strategies.

Proposition 4/Corollary 4: ADMs as Consumers of Ideas and Proposals

ADMs have little time to produce documents personally, research matters, and deliberate. They are therefore largely consumers of documents, research findings, and proposals generated elsewhere in the organization.

The implication of these propositions and corollaries is that ADMs operate in two related but distinct contexts when performing routine management. One context is strategic, cerebral, and abstract. It involves setting long-range plans, developing systems of administrative control, and monitoring action through these systems—all matters that are disparately captured in the propositions and corollaries. “Technocratic” is an adjective that properly describes this context. The second context is less adequately captured in the suppositions. It is intimate, immediate, and particularistic. Proposition 4/Corollary 4 provides the sharpest insight into this presumed aspect of the ADM job. The corollary implies making quick decisions and assessing problems and possibilities. Above all, it implies problem solving, which Corson and Paul describe as a central feature of the activities of men at the top and which is confirmed as important in other literature.

There is a natural connection between these two contexts insofar as the second supplies ADMs with opportunities to provide guidance and leadership relevant to the first. Close interaction on the substance of divisional business also supplies a necessary human-scaled perspective that complements the technocratic insights garnered from formal evaluation systems.

3.3. Variables Affecting ADM Work

Although the Alberta executive profile leaves the impression that there is uniformity in executive work, other sources cited recognize that the nature of the work is contingent on a number of factors. Those codified in the literature review include the following.

Proposition 1/Corollary 2: The Hierarchical Effect

An official's placement within the organizational hierarchy affects the nature of tasks performed. Nominally, the higher an official's hierarchical station, the greater the job's strategic focus and intellectual abstraction.

Proposition 1/Corollary 3: The Size Effect

ADM job orientations differ as a function of organizational size. ADMs managing larger organizations devote greater energies to:

- (a) dealing with the volume of issues, decisions, and activities generated in the organization.
- (b) interacting with greater numbers of system actors.
- (c) managing conflicts and frictions among system actors.
- (d) managing through abstract control systems and through layers of intermediaries.

Proposition 1/Corollary 4: Supervisory Style

The deputy minister's competence, abrasiveness, and expectations have a direct bearing on the ADM's task orientations.

Proposition 7: Classification Distinctions within ADM Ranks

Operationally defined ADMs possessing different PAO executive management classification designations do not fundamentally differ in the requirements and performance of work.

Proposition 9: Job Function Distinctions

Program managers, supporting staff managers, and managers of professional ADMs differ significantly in their performance of certain tasks, orientations to other system actors, and role conceptions.

Proposition 9/Corollary 1: Distinguishing Characteristics of Supporting Staff Managers

Supporting staff managers are distinguished by the following attributes:

- (a) formal responsibilities for exercising control over other principal managerial cohorts using dictates and perspectives defined by central administrative authorities.
- (b) high frequency of contact with other principal managerial cohorts whose members seek advice on matters of central agency policies and preferences.
- (c) divided accountabilities to departmental hierarchy and peers, and to central agencies and the standards of their governmental profession.

Proposition 9/Corollary 2: Distinguishing Characteristics of Managers of Professionals

Managers of professionals are distinguished by:

- (a) a strong allegiance to their "first" or "principal" profession.
- (b) requirement to balance organizational and professional perspectives.
- (c) loose supervision from above.
- (d) collegial and largely informal relationships with subordinates.
- (e) strong substantive focus to interactions with subordinates.
- (f) requirements to convert technical information and ideas developed within the organization into understandable form so they can be communicated within the system to nonprofessionals.

Proposition 9/Corollary 3: Distinguishing Characteristics of Program Managers

Program managers are distinguished by:

- (a) less active departmental peer consultation than supporting staff managers.

- (b) less active liaison with members of their first profession than managers of professionals and supporting staff managers who claim a governmental profession.
- (c) attention to managing constituent relationships.
- (d) requirements for managing extra-agency relationships using persuasion, negotiation, and representation.

Proposition 9/Corollary 4: Relating to External Constituents

Program managers and managers of professionals more readily communicate with extragovernmental actors than do supporting staff managers.

Proposition 9/Corollary 5: Relating to Central Agencies

Supporting staff managers more readily communicate with central agencies than do program managers and managers of professionals.

The supposition concerning a hierarchical effect—Proposition 1/Corollary 2—can be sharpened with reference to heretofore unreported comparative elite project findings. CEP researchers hypothesize, “the higher an official’s status, the more frequent his interaction with central policy makers,”⁸⁷ and deduce from their data that “higher-ranking bureaucrats are better connected to the centres of power and somewhat less closely linked to outsiders” than those at lower ranks.⁸⁸ Indeed, Atkinson and Coleman observe that CEP researchers find important interaction pattern differences within a very narrow band of the senior hierarchies they studied.⁸⁹ In their attempt to replicate the CEP findings in the Canadian federal context, Atkinson and Coleman report, “Senior officials are much more active than junior officials in what we have called the departmental policy network and the policy integration network.”⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 210.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 226.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 70.

⁹⁰ M. M. Atkinson and W. D. Coleman, “Bureaucrats and Politicians in Canada: An Examination of the Political Administration Model,” *Comparative Political Studies* 18, no. 1 (June 1985): 69. The *department policy network* of which they write comprises the top departmental official in the respondent’s

Thus hierarchy not only affects orientations towards matters such as long-range planning and managing by formalistic and abstract systems, it also places officials in progressively closer contact with the centre of government. This point might be deduced from the supposition that ADMs control the flow of policy proposals and advice to the minister and higher authorities, and those concerning differential corporate responsibilities among ADMs and deputies. This is confirmed by the CEP and Canadian evidence. Minimally, the supposition has implications for Proposition 1/Corollary 2, which should include reference to the relationship between hierarchy and closer relationships with central authorities. The proposition is revised.

Proposition 1/Corollary 2: The Hierarchical Effect

An official's placement within the organizational hierarchy affects the nature of tasks performed. Nominally, the higher an official's hierarchical station, the greater the job's strategic focus and intellectual abstraction, and the closer the official's ties to the centres of administrative and political power.

The character of sectoral relationships likely has an influence on the nature of work and interactions. This matter has not received attention thus far, since the sources consulted are silent on the point. However, literature addressing state and society relationships, interest group politics, policy communities and networks, and political elites does address differential effects. For example, a scholar on corporatism, Alan Cawson, asserts that there can be a marked difference in relationships between state sectors and external interests.⁹¹ The essence of his observation is that different politics exist between the state and the production and consumption sectors of society. On the one hand, corporatist arrangements are most likely found in state relations with the product

department, the minister, and other ministers, while the *policy integration* network contains officials of the Privy Council Office, senior civil servants in other departments, and ministers in other departments.

⁹¹ See Alan Cawson, "Pluralism, Corporatism and the Role of the State," *Government and Opposition* 13 (1978), especially pp. 196-97, and Alan Cawson, *Corporatism and Political Theory* (New York: B. Blackwell, 1986), chapters 3 and 7, especially pp. 140ff.

sector. On the other hand, pluralist arrangements are much more likely to be found in state-consumption relationships. Bureaucrats presumably have less independent power in corporatist relationships, as they act as mediators between state political actors and external actors. Paradoxically, it is possible that the bureaucratic actors who are situated within corporatist arrangements may enjoy considerable influence over their bureaucratic peers by virtue of their corporatist relationships.⁹² B. Guy Peters develops a comprehensive scheme cataloging principal types of bureaucratic-interest group relationships. Importantly, the defining character of relationships differs within each principal type. For example, "legitimate" relationships are characterized by bargaining between the bureaucracy and interest groups, whereas *clientela* relationships are characterized by a "symbiosis" among the parties.⁹³ Evert Lindquist hypothesizes administrative behaviours that correspond to primary types of policy communities identified in recent Canadian public policy research.⁹⁴ Bureaucratic behaviour includes information exchange, negotiation, joint planning, and arbitration. The prominence and balance among these behaviours depend on the nature of bureaucratic-interest-group relationships within a given sectoral area or "policy community."

A proposition capturing the effect of relating to different types of extragovernmental policy networks is captured in Proposition 1/Corollary 5.

⁹² This point is made in somewhat different terms by Rianne Mahon, who writes of the bureaucracy existing as a cosmopolitan entity within which various interests of the society are represented. Mahon's point is that even where interests are represented within the bureaucracy, the capacity to affect policy is uneven. See Rianne Mahon, "Canadian Public Policy: The Unequal Structure of Representation," in *The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power*, ed. Leo Panitch (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 165–98. Cawson would undoubtedly acknowledge this point, and add that distinctions in representation are heightened by the type of representation accorded through forms of representation; that is, through pluralist relationship or corporatist representation and interrelationships.

⁹³ B. Guy Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, 2d ed. (New York: Longman, 1984), 151–67.

⁹⁴ See Evert Lindquist, "Public Managers and Policy Communities: Learning to Meet New Challenges," *Canadian Public Administration* 35, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 127–59.

Proposition 1/Corollary 5: Effects of Policy Community Environment

ADMs exhibit different administrative behaviours when operating in different policy community environments.

A department's function may also affect the nature of an official's work.

Comparative Elite Project researchers explore this question and report that in interacting with a broad range of system actors, "one's department has little bearing...."⁹⁵ However, they find an exception in the "state maintenance" ministries which "as 'insider' departments with important clearinghouse functions, are less involved with clientele groups."⁹⁶ Atkinson and Coleman—who define the basis for structural location somewhat differently than Aberbach and company⁹⁷—conclude the following from their research:

Officials in functional departments [i.e., either central agencies or departments organized around the achievement of an objective not confined to a particular sector], regardless of rank, tend to prevail in both of the political administrative networks that we have described. They tend to have more frequent contact with senior departmental officials and they are more frequently in contact with officials and ministers outside of their own departments. Bureaucrats in clientele departments have about the same level of extrabureaucratic contacts as their colleagues in functional departments, but they are much less likely to participate in either of the two political administration networks.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 226.

⁹⁶ CEP structural locational categories are "social service" and "state maintenance" departments. The basis for these classifications is not made explicit, although from the commentary it seems reasonable to assume that state maintenance departments are akin to central agencies. *Ibid.*, 226.

⁹⁷ Atkinson and Coleman define "clientele departments" as ones that "are organized around an identifiable sector of the economy and are legally obliged to develop and maintain an orientation toward the interests that comprise this sector. Functional departments, by contrast, denote either central agencies or departments organized around the achievement of an objective not confined to a particular sector, such as the development of scientific policy or improvement of communication facilities." "Politicians and Bureaucrats in Canada," 70–71.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 71.

These results point to the prospect of differences in other actor relationships that are promoted by departmental function. Proposition 1/Corollary 6 addresses the prospect that departmental function influences interactions with other system actors.

Proposition 1/Corollary 6: The Effect of Departmental Function

ADMs differ in their interactions with other system actors as a consequence of the function of their employing department.

For a complete summary of all propositions and corollaries, see Appendix D.

3.4. Summary and Conclusion

In summary, the essence of the ADM job can be viewed in much the same way as that of the deputy minister's job: advising the minister, serving the management requirements of government, and playing a crucial role in departmental management. This is not to assert that the ADM job is the same as the deputy's, or even that ADMs operate as deputy ministers on a smaller scale. In matters of giving policy advice and serving the collective management requirements of the government, the literature strongly suggests that the deputy has greater and weightier responsibilities.

The deputy is defined as the core communication channel of the department and judges the fitness of recommendations flowing to the minister. However, ADMs appear to have important responsibilities in matters of policy generation and advice. In the realm of departmental management the contributions of ADMs are often greater than those of deputies, as well as different in kind. The ADM level appears to be the locus of policy generation and leadership within departments. ADM primacy in these areas presumably stems from greater opportunity to focus on policy and leadership matters as well as ADM expertise and knowledge of the organization. Whether ADM leadership champions new visions with a large measure of risk taking and managing organizational transformation is not clear, and for hypothetical purposes it is assumed that Alberta officials do not

champion new visions. Evidence addressing federal ADM and deputy positions is contradictory on this point. Also murky is the significance of the ADM's role in managing the external environment. Osbaldeston points out that this is a central feature of the ADM job, but other writings indicate that subordinates and the deputy also respond to external actors. That both might have significant responsibilities is not illogical. For example, Atkinson and Coleman find that both senior and junior officials maintain contact with firms, even though senior officials interact more readily with chief executive officers.⁹⁹ Thus certain constituencies are the principal preserve of a given level of officialdom. Although deputies almost have a franchise on interactions with members of the political executive, similar divisions of labour could exist with other cohorts within the political community.

ADMs presumably shoulder greater responsibility for departmental management than their deputies. This involves devising the means to implement programs and policies and seeing that the job is accomplished. In this area the more pertinent question does not seem to be the distinctiveness of the ADM role in comparison to the deputy's job, but its distinctiveness and primacy in relation to the executive officials who report to the ADM—the third tier of officialdom. Presumably third tier managers are more deeply involved in action management than their ADMs.

Relationships between the ADM job and that of third tier officials can be deduced from the suppositions and commentary. As ADM jobs are higher on the departmental hierarchy, they can be assumed to be "bigger." Moreover, the logic of hierarchy—as it is revealed in the job descriptions and profiles—dictates that higher officials have greater responsibility for long-term planning, and greater administrative oversight responsibilities that require them to develop means to monitor organizational activity. ADMs are

⁹⁹ Atkinson and Coleman, "Bureaucrats and Politicians in Canada," 69.

presumably closer to the centre of government. In leadership matters, ADMs presumably are, in metaphoric terms, either architects, with subordinates as their engineers, or they are the engineers and subordinates are managerial tradespersons of the organization. The ambiguity of the character of Alberta ADM leadership leaves this question open.

When it comes to differences in advising the minister, tier three officials ostensibly have less opportunity than ADMs to interact with the minister and other members of the political executive, as communications normally move vertically through the chain of command. (Proposition 6/Corollary 6: ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice). It is remotely possible that tier three officials tender advice on a par with ADMs. Yet, even where ADMs and their subordinates are equally active in advising the minister, there is room for the ADM to serve as an arbiter of recommendations flowing upward in a manner analogous to that which Osbaldeston reserves for deputies. In a similar vein, whereas deputies filter information downward, and thus shield ADMs and lower level officials from elements of politics, ADMs can be assumed to act in a similar fashion with their subordinates.

On the matter of shouldering collective management responsibility, it is likely that the ADM's role will be more pronounced than of the third tier bureaucrats. This is noted with the reservation that ADMs may have a fundamentally different stake than deputies in the management responsibility of government, owing to the basis of their appointments and their multiple responsibilities.

Job function, department function, departmental and organizational size, leadership styles, and sectoral relationships have been raised as factors that affect the nature of ADM work. It remains to be seen how much variation in job focus is a consequence of functional orientation. If ADMs are truly general managers, the level of variation occasioned by different functional foci may be relatively small. However,

according to Corson and Paul's thesis, despite similarities in the work of "men near the top," significant differences in practice are promoted by functional focus.

There is reason to believe that much of what is found in the literature is deficient in providing a guide to the nature of ADM work in Alberta. Propositions are ventured but they must be tested, as Alberta circumstances may produce unique results. For example, it is likely that Alberta deputy ministers focus more directly on departmental administrative matters than their federal counterparts. The Alberta government is characterized by smaller and fewer departments organized according to the "general holding company" model, lengthy tenures in top positions, vertical promotion through the ranks, and mainline promotion tracks running through program delivery divisions. Greater administrative focus and departmental/sectoral knowledge result in these officials having a more direct hand in departmental management matters. Moreover, while there is no guarantee that long-serving and knowledgeable deputies are better positioned to provide visionary leadership to their departments, the likelihood that they possess substantial knowledge would imply this. Thus, one can speculate that within the Alberta government many leadership qualities that exist at the federal ADM level are evident at the provincial deputy minister level, and Alberta ADMs are analogous to federal director generals.

Alberta ADM's tendering of policy advice could be diminished owing to the same factors. Specifically, given their personal familiarity with substantive matters, more knowledgeable deputies would have less reason to call upon the expertise of their executive personnel when briefing the minister. Alberta Tories' strong rhetorical orientation toward a division between politics and administration is presumed to suppress Image III and Image IV policy-related behaviours.

Introduced as an article of faith in chapter 1 is that the ADM position is important and deserves study. This essay has progressed to the point where this article of faith can

be converted into a question. Specifically, "What is so particular about the ADM job?" The question has been posed in this chapter but remains to be examined in the light of evidence.

CHAPTER 4

THE WORK OF ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTERS ANALYZED

4.0. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold: (1) to test the general validity of the assistant deputy minister (ADM) work construct defined in chapter 3 and (2) to provide a comparative perspective on ADM function and task performance in positions within the upper echelon of the Alberta civil service.

Chapter inquiry is framed with attention to three principal functions: policy formulation and advising, corporate representation, and departmental management (see Proposition 1). Analysis seeks to confirm that ADMs engage in the functions, and to identify functionally important tasks. The analysis seeks a systematic basis for distinguishing ADMs from deputies and third tier administrators by exploring the importance they ascribe to performing functions and tasks.

The propositions and corollaries defined in chapter 3 provide structure and rigour to the inquiry. Data collected in section 3 of the Alberta executives survey are used in statistical analysis and selective use is made of data collected in section 1. Information garnered in taped interviews is also used.

Section 4.1 addresses the policy formulation and advice function, while section 4.2 considers the corporate representation function. Section 4.3 delves into the ADM departmental management function, exploring suppositions with reference to the major subfunctional categories introduced in chapter 3. The character of ADM organizational leadership responsibilities receives special attention in this section. Section 4.4 provides selected reflections on findings derived from analysis.

4.1. The Policy Formulation and Advisory Function

Chapter 3 suppositions posit that ADMs formulate policy proposals (Proposition 6) and offer policy advice to the minister and deputy minister (Proposition 6/Corollary 1). It is assumed that while ADMs offer advice that ranges on a continuum from technical to something approaching political (Proposition 6/Corollary 4), the preponderance of this advice will be administrative or technical (Proposition 6/Corollary 2).

A number of policy formulation and advisory tasks are contained within section 3 of the survey instrument. Analysis reveals they fall into two distinct categories.¹ One category consists of questions asked of the minister and by the minister, and ministerial briefing material. The second involves advice to the minister and higher policy councils, and the preparation of important policy documents tied to policy initiatives. Scales are defined which measure the importance that officials assign to performing both categories of activities. A Ministerial Briefing and Replies Scale (Briefing Scale) is composed of five tasks with a range of scores between 0 and 25.² The Policy Initiatives Advice Scale (Advice Scale) is composed of four tasks and its scores range between 0 and 20.³

¹ These groups were determined by factor analyzing responses to the "policy" variables defined in section 3 of the survey instrument using the Principal Components factor extraction method, and the Orthotran/Varimax transformation method. Variables composing the two scales were selected from the first two factors appearing on the Oblique Solution Reference Structure using factor-loading coefficients of .50 or greater.

² The Ministerial Briefing and Replies Scale (Briefing Scale) comprises the following highly correlated tasks: (VAR061) prepare responses to questions/issues raised in the legislature; (VAR062) prepare replies to questions/queries directed to the minister; (VAR064) prepare briefing notes for the minister; (VAR071) prepare information on the trends and issues which may lead to legislative questions; (VAR080) review and edit replies to ministerial inquiries. The sample mean for the Briefing Scale is 20.94, skewedness = -1.99, kurtosis = 4.56.

³ The Policy Initiatives Advice Scale (Advice Scale) comprises the following highly correlated tasks: (VAR075) give advice or answer questions at cabinet, caucus, or legislative committees; (VAR082) prepare proposals for draft legislation; (VAR083) prepare inputs to draft legislation, major government statements, and cabinet documents; (VAR084) prepare cabinet documents. The sample mean for the Advice Scale is 12.43, skewedness = -.48, kurtosis = -.81.

Although labeled an advice scale, it might as easily be titled a policy formulation scale, given the items of which it is comprised.

ADMs average 21.25 on the Briefing Scale. This high score suggests that briefing the minister and legislators is important to ADMs and presumably a key feature of the job. Indeed, ADMs rate all items on a five-point importance scale above 4.0, with the exception of preparing information on the trends and issues that may lead to legislative questions. Preparation of responses to questions and issues raised in the legislature and preparation of briefing notes for the minister have average scores higher than 4.5. The significance accorded these tasks raises doubt over the universal applicability of Proposition 4/Corollary 4, wherein ADMs are described as having little time to prepare documents personally and to do other research and writing. However, providing briefing materials to the minister and legislators may be the exception to this rule.

ADMs rate items on the Advice Scale a notably lower 13.39 on a scale with a 20 point maximum. None of the four items in the Advice Scale rate 4.0 or higher on the five-point scale. Tellingly, perhaps, ADMs rate giving advice and answering questions at cabinet, caucus, or legislative committees at 2.94. It is evident that preparing draft legislation proposals and cabinet documents, and making inputs into these policy papers, are relatively unimportant for most ADMs. Whether this can be generalized across the ADM population, or the low ratings represent a differentiation of labour within the ranks, or other factors are involved, remains an open question for the moment.

What can be said is that ADMs brief and advise the minister and other political authorities. Briefing the minister is important, as is apparent in the high importance scores ADMs register on all Briefing Scale tasks. Advising activities are obviously considered less important, but these relatively low importance ratings should not be construed as meaning ADMs place no stock in advising the minister. Their lack of

importance may reflect that many ADMs engage in these activities only periodically.⁴ The fact that a sizable majority of ADMs register some importance (a score of 2 or above on the five-point response scale) for all the items comprising the Advice Scale is consistent with Proposition 6 (Policy Formulation).

Proposition 6/Corollary 1 also asserts that ADMs advise their deputy minister. ADMs rate highly three tasks that address this aspect of the corollary: *preparing replies to questions and queries directed to the deputy minister* ($\mu=4.5$), *preparing briefing notes for the deputy minister* ($\mu=4.44$), and *summarizing information for my minister* ($\mu=4.29$). This aspect of Proposition 6/Corollary 1 is therefore supported.⁵

Proposition 9 predicts that job function distinctions prompt significant differences in the performance of certain job tasks. However, it is not clear from the literature review and formalized suppositions whether ADM job cohorts will be distinguished on policy formulation and advice tasks. Presumably they will be distinguished on the Advice Scale, since specialized planning and policy organizations exist within departments. ADMs heading these organizations should place heavier importance on policy advising matters, as this is their specialization, than do other ADMs.

The three job function categories introduced in chapter 1 are used to test whether Proposition 9 differences extend to policy formulation tasks. The functions are planning and policy, administration and operational support, and program delivery. These

⁴ Data do not exist to determine the frequency with which ADMs perform the Advice Scale tasks. However, a close look at the items suggests they might be engaged in only periodically and therefore might not be salient to the whole ADM population. For example, at any given time proposals for draft legislation are not likely to be on the front burner for most ADMs, and the same might be said about major government statements and cabinet documents.

⁵ Interestingly, ADMs regard briefing the minister as important as briefing the deputy minister.

categories are admittedly roughly-hewn and therefore results flowing from them must be interpreted with caution.⁶

Table 4-1.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Policy Initiative Advice Scale⁷

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Planning and policy (22)	14.65	-	-	-	-
Program delivery (49)	13.76	1.35	-.084	.66	.5139
Administrative and operational support (32)	11.97	1.45	-.240	1.84	.0691
R ² = .0369 Adj. R ² = .0177 F-test = 1.917 p = .1524 N = 103					

⁶ Undoubtedly the most vexing problem in classifying program delivery officials and administrative and operational support officials concerns classification of executives employed within the central agencies. To put the problem in perspective, consider the difficulty of classifying the executive director, Management Programs Division, within the Personnel Administration Office (PAO). This official clearly provides a support service to the rest of the government with programs such as the Executive Search Branch—discussed in chapter 2—under his or her ambit. At a government level, therefore, classification is not a problem; he or she is appropriately classified within the administrative support grouping. Where classification does become problematic is when the level of analysis is situated at the department level. Administrative support services for PAO are not, in fact, housed within the department but within the Department of Labour, whose ADM, Support Services Division, reports to the deputy minister of labour. At this level of analysis, and under these circumstances, is it logical to classify the executive director, Management Programs Division, within the program delivery cohort, as he or she is involved in managing the delivery of an array of programs. It happens that those who are the “clients” are managers within the government. Notwithstanding the latter point, the decision rule adopted for the Personnel Administration Office is that all executive level officials, with the exception of the public service commissioner, are classified as administrative and operational support.

A more discriminating classification regime has been devised for the Treasury Department, wherein both revenue and taxation and management control functions are found. The rule is that officials involved with management control are classified within the administrative and operational support cohort, while those involved with revenue, taxation, and supervision of trust companies and other financial institutions are classified within the program development cohort. The Public Works, Supply and Services (PWSS) department presents a classification problem similar to that of the Treasury. Within the department are two largely discrete functions: public works and supply and services operations. Although an argument can be made that this department deserves to be classified as a central agency, and its executives classified within the A/OS job category in similar fashion to PAO officials, a more discriminating classification is attempted with executive officials involved in construction and project management activities classified within the program delivery cohort. However, these officials are the exception: the remainder of PWSS executives are placed within the administrative support category, as their positions entail managing a range of services to departments.

⁷ See section 1.2 for a description of the interpretation of table statistics.

Table 4-2.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Ministerial Briefing and Reporting Scale

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Planning and policy (22)	20.18	-	-	-	-
Program delivery (49)	21.61	1.16	.16	1.23	.2215
Administrative and operational support (33)	21.49	1.08	.16	1.21	.2285
$R^2 = .0176$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .0016$ $F\text{-test} = .907$ $p = .407$ $N = 104$					

Table 4-1 fails to reveal a statistically significant difference between policy ADMs and their program and administrative support colleagues on the Advice Scale. There is a weak statistical difference between the planning and administrative cohorts which, in combination with the administrative cohort's lower average scores, suggests that this group places less importance on advising. No difference exists when the job function cohorts are compared on the Briefing Scale (see table 4-2).

The fact that program delivery ADMs place nearly as much importance on advising the minister on policy initiatives as do planning ADMs may reflect the former being required to be involved in the advisory process. It may also reflect a division of labour in certain departments that is not duplicated in others. The prospect that such differences are present is made probable when observing that in several departments no ADM level officials with specialized responsibilities for planning and policy are found. Presumably, in the absence of senior planning officials these functions are overseen by either program delivery or administrative ADMs, or by the deputy.⁸

In departments where ADM level planning and policy specialists are identified, half of the specialists are located in the upper quartile of the Advice Scale response

⁸ A third alternative, which is found in some departments, is that an independent planning and policy organization exists but it is not headed by an executive level official.

distribution. Only a third of the program delivery ADMs fall in this highest quartile, and even fewer administrative ADMs do so. Moreover, nearly all ADMs heading the "purest" policy and planning organizations—organizations that are wholly focused on planning and policy matters⁹—are found within the upper quartile of the distribution. Most of these officials head planning and policy divisions in the larger departments, or in departments which have a strong "ministry of state" complexion.¹⁰

Thus, while table 4-1 statistics indicate that planning and policy ADMs are not distinguished by the importance they extend to policy formulating and advising, closer examination reveals that ADMs heading specialized policy units rate policy formulation and advice highly. The strong importance specialized policy officials place on policy advising provides some support for Proposition 6 (Policy Formulation).

The evidence relating to briefing and reporting (table 4-2) shows no discernible pattern differentiating the ADM job cohorts. Briefing activities are generally rated as important in all cohorts, and variations within the groupings are similar. Certainly these results do not reveal the difference predicted in Proposition 9.

Proposition 1/Corollary 2 declares that hierarchical position affects the nature of tasks performed by officials. More pertinent to analysis of the ADM advisory role is the suggestion that higher hierarchical stations bring officials into closer relations with the centres of administrative and political power. This supposition is also implied in Proposition 6/Corollary 3 (Deputy as Gatekeeper of Ministerial Access), and Proposition 6/Corollary 6 (ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice). The collective logic of these propositions suggests policy formulation and advising activities are more important

⁹ Some ADMs head divisions which mix administrative and operational support functions with planning and policy functions and thus are regarded as being less than "pure" planning and policy even though they have been classified as such for the purposes of this study.

¹⁰ Departments include Advanced Education, Agriculture, Economic Development, Education, Family and Social Services, FIGA, Health, Occupational Health, Recreation, and Transportation.

to deputy ministers than to their subordinates, as well as being more important to ADMs than to their subordinates.

Table 4-3.—Executive Level Cohorts Compared on Ministerial Briefing and Reporting Scale

<i>Executive Level Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
ADMs (104)	21.25	-	-	-	-
Deputies (26)	21.38	.99	.0097	.1361	.8919
EXL3 (87)	20.45	.66	-.0873	1.2220	.2227
R ² = .0907 Adj. R ² = .0082 F-test = .8881 p = .4129 N = 217					

Table 4-3 compares ADMs, deputy ministers, and third tier officialdom on the Briefing Scale. Table 4-3 results call into question whether there are hierarchical differences in briefing tasks performed at the executive level. The executive cohorts register high mean scores on the Briefing Scale and do not differ significantly on other statistical measures. This noted, a nonparametric statistical measure suggests there are selected differences between the cohorts on certain tasks. This implies that there are functional differences not apparent in the Briefing Scale comparisons (see table 4-3).

Weak statistical differences appear with VAR061, VAR071, and to a lesser extent VAR080 when using the Kruskal-Wallis statistic. Multiple regression F-test probability reveals no statistically significant difference between the cohorts on VAR061, which is consistent with the Kruskal-Wallis statistic results. However, a more discriminating t-test with the regression analysis does show that deputy ministers are statistically distinguished from third tier executives on VAR071 (t-value = 2.43, p = .016). They rate preparing information on trends and issues in anticipation of legislative questions with a mean importance score of 4.0, while tier three officials have a decidedly lower 3.33. ADMs average 3.64, which places them roughly between the

senior and subordinate cohorts. While ADMs are not statistically distinguished from the other two cohorts in the importance they accord the task, a hierarchical effect is nevertheless apparent given the differences between the deputies and the lowest executive management tier. Without a doubt deputy ministers consider preparation in anticipation of legislative questions, which is clearly oriented toward the politic domain, to be important.

Table 4-4.—Executive Level Cohorts Compared on Briefing Scales Tasks¹¹

Variable	H (cft)	Probability
VAR061 Prepare responses to questions/issues raised in the legislature.	5.40	p = .0673
VAR062 Prepare replies to questions/queries directed to the minister.	.52	p = .7725
VAR064 Prepare briefing notes for the minister.	1.32	p = .5181
VAR071 Prepare information on the trends and issues which may lead to legislative questions.	5.47	p = .0650
VAR080 Review and edit replies to ministerial inquiries.	4.77	p = .0921

Deputy ministers are also distinguished from ADMs and third tier executives on the importance they accord to fashioning ministerial inquiries (VAR080). However, in this instance, deputies are the exception since they rate the activity as less important (DM, $\mu = 3.58$) than either ADMs or third tier executives (ADM, $\mu = 4.27$; EXL3, $\mu = 4.28$).¹²

¹¹ See section 1.2 for a brief introduction to the Kruskal-Wallis test.

¹² There is always a discrepancy between Kruskal-Wallis and multiple regression generated probability coefficients for variables. In this instance the difference is fairly important. While the Kruskal-Wallis probability reported for VAR080 is p. = .09, the regression F-test probability is p. = .0218. The t-value and probability coefficient generated when deputies and ADMs are regressed on the variable is: t-value = 2.65, p. = .0085. The t-value and probability coefficient produced when deputies and tier three officials are regressed is: t-value = 2.62, p. = .0094. There is no statistical distinction between ADM and tier three officialdom on this item.

Neither ADMs nor their subordinates are statistically distinguished on this task, which both consider important.

In sum, while the hierarchical cohorts are not distinguished on the Briefing Scale, they are distinguished on selected component tasks. Factors that might explain the significant differences include the locus of expertise, who has the time and responsibility for writing and researching, and who is responsible for attending to legislature and political matters. These findings support Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect) both in that hierarchical placement affects task orientations, and in its more prescriptive supposition that the higher an official is in the administrative hierarchy the more attention is paid to centres of administrative and political power. The Proposition 3/Corollary 3 (Substantive Knowledge) notion that command of technical knowledge in policy and administration is necessary for competence is not addressed in the analysis of Briefing Scale items. However, high importance ratings for editing and reviewing replies to ministerial inquiries imply that ADMs and their subordinates perform these activities because of their expertise.

Table 4-5.—Executive Level Cohorts Compared on Policy Initiative Advice Scale

<i>Executive Level Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
ADMs (104)	13.39	-	-	-	-
Deputies (26)	16.73	1.21	.1799	2.76	.0062
EXL3 (87)	9.33	.80	-.3304	5.08	.0001
$R^2 = .4216$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .1777$ $F\text{-test} = 23.1294$ $p = .0001$ $N = 217$					

There is a pronounced hierarchical effect when ADMs and other executives are compared on the Policy Initiatives Advice Scale (table 4-5), as statistically significant differences appear between every combination of the executive level cohorts when they

are regressed on the Advice Scale. Deputy ministers clearly consider factors related to scale items important (DM, $\mu = 16.73$), ADMs less so, and third tier officials generally consider them to be unimportant.

Table 4-6.—Executive Level Cohorts Compared on Policy Initiative Advice Scale Tasks

Variable	H (cft)	Probability
VAR075 Give advice or answer questions at cabinet, caucus, or legislative committees.	34.34	p = .0001
VAR082 Prepare proposals for draft legislation.	10.50	p = .0053
VAR083 Prepare inputs to draft legislation, major government statements, and cabinet documents.	15.26	p = .0005
VAR084 Prepare cabinet documents.	41.86	p = .0001

Table 4-6 reveals that the executive level cohorts are significantly distinguished by a statistical measure on every task comprising the Advice Scale. Moreover, multiple regression analysis results (not displayed in tabular form) indicate—with a single exception—statistically significant distinctions among each executive level cohort on each task. The exception pertains to preparing proposals for draft legislation. Deputy ministers and ADMs are not differentiated in considering this task to be of high importance.

The results reviewed in the foregoing paragraphs permit certain conclusions to be drawn about the ADM role as a policy advisor. First, and most obvious, is that ADMs are involved in formulating policy and supplying information and advice to higher authorities. Proposition 6 (Policy Formulation) is thereby supported. ADMs rate drafting and vetting timely replies to ministerial inquiries and developing briefing materials as their most important advisory activities. ADMs are not distinguished from other Alberta public service executives in briefing the minister, since everyone considers this business

important. In any event, Proposition 6/Corollary 1 (Offering Policy Advice) is supported insofar as the ministerial briefing advice is concerned.

ADMs ascribe notably less importance to matters dealing with tendering advice to higher political councils or developing major policy documents. These appear to be of only middling importance to ADMs, and in this regard doubt is cast on the verity of Proposition 6/Corollary 1. However, Proposition 6/Corollary 1 is supported when it comes to ADMs supplying advice to the deputy minister. ADMs rate all such tasks highly.

Proposition 6/Corollary 6 (ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice) and Proposition 3/Corollary 1 (Judgement) receive support since ADMs consider reviewing and editing ministerial replies to ministerial inquiries an important activity. Editing and reviewing replies undoubtedly involves making judgements concerning context and affect, which is a form of gatekeeping. Although this item alone does not sustain the gatekeeping and extra quotient of judgement propositions which are cast more broadly in the literature, nevertheless, it offers initial evidence.

The deputy as gatekeeper notion contained within Proposition 6/Corollary 3 (Deputy as Gatekeeper of Ministerial Access) is not supported by the importance deputies place on editing and reviewing ministerial replies. Deputies appear to leave this to ADMs and their subordinates. Yet, the significantly greater importance that deputy ministers ascribe to the task *giving advice and answering questions at cabinet, caucus, or legislative committees* strongly suggests a division of labour that ostensibly could involve gatekeeping by deputy ministers. Although ADMs rate the importance of this task low, they nonetheless rate it considerably higher than do third tier officials. By the same logic applied to deputies, this finding suggests an ADM gatekeeping role, and can be added to the evidence cited above supporting Proposition 6/Corollary 6 (ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice).

Although ADMs do not place particular importance on formulating policy and tendering advice to politicians, the same is not true of deputy ministers. The evidence generated by executive level comparisons on the Advice Scale and by executive level cohort comparisons on the individual tasks comprising the scale supports Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect). That is, hierarchical position correlates with the importance of formulating and advising.¹³ It also correlates with the officials' propensity to relate to the political and administrative centre, which also supports the corollary.

Comparisons of ADM job function cohorts fail to reveal any statistically significant difference on the Advice or Briefing scale. Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions) is therefore questionable insofar as policy formulation and advising tasks are concerned.

While the statistical findings are not disputed as they apply to Proposition 9 and policy advising, it is worth restating that ADMs who head specialized or "pure" policy and planning organizations place greater importance on advising higher authorities than their policy and planning peers who run "mixed" operations. By logical extension it is assumed they are more involved in policy formulation and advising. Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions) is not confirmed by this logic, but the finding suggests that job function distinctions may exist but may be obscured by the study's methodology.

Little useful evidence concerning the verity of Proposition 6/Corollary 2 (Political Content) is derived from the scale findings. The importance of the Briefing Scale items is to suggest that the ADM-as-technical-advisor, a supposition of Proposition 6/Corollary 2, has substance. A low importance rating for advising caucus and cabinet also suggests that

¹³ It might be argued parenthetically that, strictly speaking, importance ratings do not speak to the "nature" of a task. The point is important since the Hierarchical Effect corollary speaks to the effect of echelon on the nature of tasks performed. However, while the point is acknowledged as logical when considering a specific task, it is not when several tasks are considered. The nature of an ensemble of tasks undoubtedly changes with variations in the importance of tasks comprising the ensemble.

ADMs are not involved in offering political advice. However, it is ultimately possible for the substance of communications involved in Briefing and Advise scales to be technical, political, or even partisan. The evidence explored so far does not provide clear direction. Proposition 6/Corollary 4, which predicts a range of policy role "images" centring primarily on the more traditional Image I and Image II orientations, is also left undetermined, given the data limitations and complexities mentioned above. Qualitative data, especially that considered in the following chapters, provides a better perspective on these matters.

Finally, Proposition 4/Corollary 4 (ADMs as Consumers of Ideas and Proposals), which predicts ADMs are largely consumers of ideas and documents who do not author documents or conduct research, is ambiguously debunked insofar as policy formulation and advice are concerned. ADMs appear to be involved in drafting and vetting ministerial briefs, and contribute to drafting legislation and major policy papers. The ambiguity stems from the observation that ministerial briefs usually are not elaborate documents.

4.2. Collective Management Responsibilities

Collective management responsibilities embrace a concern for the larger policy enterprise of the government, and a responsibility to central agencies and other bodies to maintain the standards of management and policy cohesion necessary for government to function. The idea is captured in Proposition 8 and qualified in Proposition 8/Corollary 1, which makes an unstated comparison between ADMs and deputy ministers.

Proposition 8 (Corporate Responsibilities)

ADMs possess corporate responsibilities that extend beyond their immediate responsibilities to manage their line organization.

Proposition 8/Corollary 1 (The Public Good and Corporate Responsibilities)

Although ADMs possess important "corporate" responsibilities they do not involve balancing conflicting demands from the political level, external interest groups, and the organization in order to serve a higher concept of the public good.

Finally, ADMs responsibilities are explicitly distinguished from those of deputy ministers.

Proposition 8/Corollary 2 (Collective Management Responsibilities)

ADMs' collective management responsibilities are fundamentally different from those of deputy ministers, as they do not possess multiple accountabilities to political and administrative authorities.

The notions of corporate and collective responsibility are used interchangeably in the proposition and corollary. Confusion may arise from this loose use of terminology in Proposition 8/Corollary 2, which declares that ADMs do not possess multiple accountabilities to political and administrative authorities. This contradicts Corson and Paul's descriptions of program managers' and supporting staff managers' multiple accountabilities,¹⁴ and also appears to contradict notions found in Proposition 9 corollaries.

Much of the confusion in Proposition 8/Corollary 2 can be laid aside if the *multiple accountabilities* of Proposition 8/Corollary 2 are defined as *multiple responsibilities*. A precise Proposition 8/Corollary 2 should read:

ADMs' collective management responsibilities are fundamentally different from those of deputy ministers, as they do not possess multiple responsibilities to political and administrative authorities.

The distinction between accountability and responsibilities is laid out by Kernaghan, who maintains the former is a matter of expectations and psychological necessity, whereas the latter is one of formal duty.¹⁵

ADMs are not assumed to be accountable to multiple political authorities, and hence there is a difference between them and their deputies. Given the prescriptions of

¹⁴ John J. Corson and R. Shale Paul, *Men Near the Top: Filling Key Posts in the Federal Service* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), 25 ff.

¹⁵ Kenneth Kernaghan, "Responsible Public Bureaucracy: A Rationale and a Framework for Analysis," *Canadian Public Administration* 6, no. 4 (1973): 363-73.

Proposition 9 corollaries, it is possible for ADMs to possess multiple accountabilities to administrative authorities. This is a central point in Corson and Paul's commentary concerning supporting staff managers. Presumably officials possess multiple responsibilities to administrative authorities as well as to many other governmental actors.

Since Proposition 8/Corollary 2 suggests that ADMs and deputy ministers differ significantly in their collective management responsibilities, it is essential to establish Alberta deputy ministerial corporate responsibilities so that comparisons can be made. Defining the deputy ministerial collective responsibilities is also valuable since suppositions regarding Alberta ADMs are derived from Canadian commentary on the federal deputy minister role and the functional characteristics of federal ADMs.

Inquiry reveals that Alberta deputy ministers hold collective management responsibilities. However, they are not as strong or as precisely defined as those of their federal counterparts, whose accountabilities to central agencies are defined in legislation, and who are accountable to the prime minister and government. In Alberta a much stronger reporting line exists between the deputy and the minister. This is true even though the deputy is appointed by the premier.

The public service commissioner writes of the primacy of the deputy-ministerial accountability relationship in the Alberta government:

The only exception [to the primacy of the ministerial accountability relationship] might be if a deputy minister felt that the direction he/she was receiving on an important issue was significantly different than what he/she thought was Government direction. He or she would likely handle that via the Deputy Minister of Executive Council but it could involve the Premier directly.¹⁶

The conclusion to be drawn from the commissioner's remarks is that Alberta deputy ministers are accountable to the government through the Executive Council Office

¹⁶ Public Service Commissioner Jim Dixon to E. C. LeSage Jr., 22 May 1992.

in order to ensure that policy direction is maintained. Therefore, there are appeals to the deputy minister of the Executive Council or the premier. However, in practice, accountability to the government is exercised with the minister.

On the matter of accountabilities to central agencies, Commissioner Dixon states that they are cemented in formal agreements by which their authority is delegated to the line deputy ministers. These are said

to take the form of *conditional pacts*, where both parties derive advantages in the efficient and effective use of resources. While all parties to such agreements have commitment to the success of the arrangement, these delegations of authority cannot be described as constituting reporting relationships between deputy ministers.¹⁷

Succinctly, responsibility to the Treasury or Personnel Administration Office does not compromise the deputy minister's accountability to the minister. Indeed, while the commissioner's description of these delegations of authority indicates accountabilities to central administrative agencies, the delegation of authority is contractual and contingent, and therefore of a lesser order than the accountability line that flows to the minister. Nonetheless, such arrangements mean that deputy ministers assume a burden for ensuring standards of administration defined by central agencies. Even where pacts are not signed, deputy ministers feel a responsibility for collective management. As one Alberta deputy minister comments, "[I am responsible] to Treasury and...the Personnel Administration Office, because there are certain policies that *you feel you have to follow* otherwise that system breaks down."¹⁸

Pacts between deputy ministers and the Personnel Administration Office involve the departments taking upon themselves the recruitment and compensation functions and pledging to administer these according to PAO prescription. The deputy minister is the

¹⁷ Ibid. Italics added for emphasis.

¹⁸ Official 221, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 2 June 1991.

official held responsible for ensuring the pact is fulfilled, although the specific responsibilities are usually delegated to an ADM or director of personnel.

Accountability for financial administration is more involved, as the machinery for ensuring probity, sound financial management, and rule compliance is more elaborate. Deputy ministers appear with their ministers before the Treasury Board and before the Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee. Deputy ministerial management acumen can be the subject of comments in the auditor general's letters and reports. While deputy ministers are not strictly accountable to the Treasury Board, the legislature, or the auditor general, there is no question that they can be held to account by each.

A fourth line of financial accountability flows from the deputy provincial treasurer to line departmental deputy ministers through the departmental senior financial officer. Although deputy ministers can play this role, it is normally assigned to the ADM level official responsible for financial operations within the department.

In summary, the evidence shows that although Alberta deputy ministers' corporate accountabilities and responsibilities reflect the broad model defined in the literature, there are notable differences between provincial and federal positions. Alberta deputy minister accountabilities to the political level exist, but the dominating tie is to the minister. Federal deputy ministers presumably have strong accountability ties to their ministers, but by comparison these ties do not predominate in the same way as in Alberta, where deputy ministers possess multiple accountabilities to central personnel and financial agencies. However, unlike those of their federal counterparts, these are not defined in legislation. Accountabilities to the Personnel Administration Office are defined through binding pacts. The legislature, Treasury Board, auditor general, comptroller, and Treasury Department hold deputy ministers accountable, but only when the deputy minister is designated as a senior financial officer is there a formal accountability.

Nothing definitive can be said about whether these less compelling Alberta deputy ministerial accountability relationships significantly differentiate Alberta and federal deputy corporate responsibilities, although in all probability there is a difference. While Alberta deputy ministers possess multiple accountabilities and responsibilities, the principal line of accountability and responsibility is found in the minister-deputy dyad. Ministerial accountability considerations may not entirely dominate, but the evidence suggests the Alberta deputy's attentions are focused on the minister. It is therefore difficult to conceive either of Alberta deputies standing above and apart from the government of the day or for the deputy minister to stand above or apart from the ministerial relationship. Under these circumstances, proof for that part of Proposition 8/Corollary 1 (The Public Good and Corporate Responsibilities) that presumes the deputy is an independent authority of public good is not compelling. Remaining within the proposition is the notion that both deputy and ADM jobs involve balancing accountabilities. This appears to be an imperative and it is of interest in defining how officials differ. This is found in Proposition 8/Corollary 1, and is at the heart of Proposition 8/Corollary 2 (Collective Management Responsibilities).

Formal ADM accountabilities to the Treasury Department exist when an official is appointed as a senior financial officer (SFO). Departmental deputy ministers can ask that a senior financial officer appointment be nullified, but only so long as an official holds the position is there a dual reporting relationship. Through the SFO charge, ADMs become directly responsible for the maintenance of centrally defined financial administration standards and for ensuring that policies established by the Treasury Department are adhered to within the department. In this regard, they are clearly involved in what Corson and Paul label the "network of authority"¹⁹ and are subject to problems of

¹⁹ Corson and Paul adopt the concept of the "network of authority" from O. Glen Stahl, whom they cite with their own amendment: "Each supervisor is his own personnel man and budget man—up to a

conflicting accountabilities which the authors describe. This is brought together under item (c) of Proposition 9/Corollary 1 (Distinguishing Characteristics of Supporting Staff Managers).

ADMs queried on this dual reporting relationship reveal it is not onerous. As one opines:

I mentioned my reporting relationship with the deputy minister. Now in my role as senior financial officer, I also have a reporting relationship directly to the comptroller within Treasury. That's a well established [reporting relationship], but it doesn't pose any problem, nor in my mind does it even pose a conflict. The working relationship is strong enough in both cases [with the deputy and the comptroller] that if there was a problem, if I have a problem or a difficulty, well then my boss is really the deputy minister, that is who I live and die with...and that's where my loyalty lies, and that's the way it has to be.²⁰

While there may be clarity on the issue of accountabilities, in day-to-day operations the matter is less sharply defined. Senior financial officers are held to account by Treasury in seeing that its corporate management policies are carried out. Interviews show that this can bring financial officers into conflict with program managers and create confusion in the minds of program managers as to the allegiances of those serving in the administrative and operational support role. As one veteran ADM observes:

Those of us in the support functions find ourselves in a very interesting dilemma. As far as the field is concerned, I think that they feel that I'm nothing more than a miniature [deputy provincial treasurer], that I report directly to [the deputy provincial treasurer], and my job is to be Treasury's representative in my department. Or when it comes to personnel and staffing division—when I am involved with Personnel—I'm nothing more than an offshoot of [the public service commissioner].... So, in many ways, you're not looked at as a member of the department but as part of the central agency function.²¹

point. That there is such a point is important. Some conditions must be established organization-wide which set boundaries on supervisory decision-making...[The supporting staff managers]...inevitably become the interpreters and, to a considerable extent, the real enforcers of these limits." See Corson and Paul, *Men Near the Top*, 75, and O. Glenn Stahl, "More on the Network of Authority," *Public Administration Review* 20, no. 1 (Winter 1960): 36.

²⁰ Official 325, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 7 May 1991.

²¹ Official 450, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 9 May 1991.

ADM relations with the central agencies can be difficult, as appears to be the case when central agency policies are considered obstructive or irrelevant to departmental requirements. In these instances ADMs in the SFO or personnel administration position find themselves caught in the middle. This is the collective management dilemma that Osbaldeston describes as facing the deputy minister, and it is the one which Corson and Paul's staff support managers face. The essential notion of Proposition 8/Corollary 1 (The Public Good and Corporate Responsibilities) is therefore supported.

ADM descriptions of internal conflicts in their role as SFO ADMs and program delivery ADMs sustains the divided accountability notion contained in Proposition 9/Corollary 1 (Distinguishing Characteristics of Supporting Staff Managers). Moreover, a hint of the administrative support ADM's controlling role is found in the last quotation.

ADMs have corporate management accountabilities that go beyond financial administration matters. While they are not bound to defend the government's general policy agenda in the same way that deputies are, they are bound as they operate within the Westminster-Whitehall tradition. They advise the minister on the effects of policy and thus consider broader government policy. Clearer evidence of this sense of government collective management responsibilities is found in an ADM interview:

I go talk to my opposite number and say, "Hey,...we are not getting anywhere on this. I don't give a damn whether your minister thinks it is a priority or not, we think it is a priority and it will be a government problem if we do not do something about it. You can't put your head in the sand here."²²

A deputy recently promoted from an ADM position discussed the collective management responsibility that impinges on the ADM and deputy in the Alberta government:

DM: In the ADM role I felt accountable to the DM, to the minister, and actually to the premier because [the policy area I was working in] is very close to the

²² Official 432, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 9 May 1991.

premier's [concerns]. In the DM role I feel like I have 50 accountabilities. I am accountable to all of my staff—and, by the way, as an ADM that's also true of the staff—I feel I am accountable to all of my staff, accountable to the minister, certainly, to the premier, and to the government as a whole—you know this entity, this amorphous entity the government—and [I feel accountable] to the public, which I don't think I really felt to a great extent on the ADM side.

ECL: That's fascinating. Why not?

DM: Because I felt more distant from it. I'm not sure that I felt myself as being responsible for a part of the public sector, which is very much that, the public sector. I was more caught up in the policy advisory role and less in the accountability.... You know, when I go back to your other question about why the accountability is there to the public, it may be that as a DM you're far more aware of things like the auditor general's report, and all of those documents in the public domain and questions in the legislature. You're sort of aware of them at the ADM level, but they don't sit on your shoulders in the same way.²³

The last remarks, which are representative of others made by deputies and ADMs interviewed, underscore the verity of Proposition 8 (Corporate Responsibilities) and notions found in its corollaries. ADMs possess collective management responsibilities and accountabilities that extend beyond their line organization responsibilities. The quotation makes it clear that at least one deputy with a comparative perspective sees a qualitative difference between the ADM and deputy roles in managing accountabilities and holding responsibilities. This observation supports Proposition 8/Corollary 2 (Collective Management Responsibilities). Finally, while Alberta deputies do not possess the same corporate accountabilities as their federal peers, one deputy minister perceives that the role involves a higher responsibility for a part of the public service.²⁴ The deputy's remarks suggest a concern for the enterprise that is not reflected in words used by ADMs. Generally, ADMs describe either a commitment to their departments or to the sector in which they operate. Responsibility for a part of the public service is not generally expressed by ADMs although given the quotation by the ADM cited above

²³ Official 221, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 02 June 1991.

²⁴ This point does not obviate the prospect that ADMs subscribe to a public service calling—there is evidence of such subscription in the interview record.

there is evidence of a larger sectoral orientation. An exception is found in commentary offered by administrative and operational support ADMs. Many of these officials feel they have a responsibility for maintaining sound corporate administrative systems in financial, personnel, and purchasing areas. However, unlike the sentiment expressed by the deputy minister, their concern is essentially managerial rather than broadly public.

4.3. Departmental Management Function

This section considers ADMs in the following managerial role orientations: (1) ADM as core divisional communicator, (2) ADM as organizational leader, and (3) ADM as manager of the external environment. These orientations approximate the principal departmental management subfunctions identified in chapter 3.²⁵ An additional role, ADM as the senior manager of a divisional organization, is not investigated, as the declared focus of this study is not managerial. However, management tasks are invariably dealt with in the following discussion. This is particularly the case in the subsection addressing leadership. Most of the suppositions defined in the administration proposition (Proposition 4) and its corollaries are addressed when considering the ADM leadership role. Principally, this is because what is described as leadership within the literature encompasses most management activities attributed to senior government managers.

(1) Functioning within the Core Communication Channel

Chapter 3 defines two principal aspects of the ADM communicator role. They are presumed gatekeepers of upward-bound policy communications and core communication channels (or the nexus) of divisional communications. The two aspects are interrelated,

²⁵ This listing of the principal managerial subfunctions takes minor liberties with the categories introduced in chapter 3. That list is as follows: (1) decision maker on recommendations to superiors, (2) core divisional communicator, (3) organizational leader, (4) manager of the external environment, (5) executive manager. The list is revised, with the first two items being placed within the same category which broadly deals with communicating. There is a classificatory logic to this marriage.

with the first a part of the second but differentiated because of its relevance to this study's separate treatment of the ADM policy role. The evidence from the investigation of the ADM policy formulation and advisory functions conducted above leads credence to Proposition 6/Corollary 6 (ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice). Within this subsection, there is a further examination of the frequency of interactions on a vertical communication axis which runs upward from tier three officials through the ADM and deputy, to the minister.

Frequency of interaction data collected in section 1 of the survey instrument lend themselves to this analysis. Gatekeeping is implied where there is a strong "cascade" effect, that is, at each level of the department hierarchy people have more intense interactions with their superiors than their subordinates have with the same superiors. Such findings also legitimate the hierarchical effect of Proposition 1/Corollary 2. Interviews are also brought to bear in studying the gatekeeping effect.

To qualify unequivocally as the nexus in the division communication net, ADMs should meet two criteria. First, to demonstrate more frequent communications with a wider range of system actors than their subordinates, and second, to possess strong ties to system actors who "count" in the political administrative segment of the bureaucracy. For our purposes, system actors who "count" are the minister, the deputy minister, departmental ADMs, other senior political officials, and central agency officials.²⁶ Comparisons between deputies, ADMs, and tier three officials using these same criteria can be applied to test whether deputy ministers are the core communication channel in the department, as is claimed by Osbaldeston and implied in the hierarchy proposition. Core

²⁶ A failure to satisfy the first criterion is not considered as significant as a failure to satisfy the second. When one cohort satisfies the first, and another the second, the cohort which is distinguished in dealing with system actors that "count" is regarded as the nexus of communication.

Table 4-7.—Frequency of Executive Level Cohort Per Annum Contacts with Key System Actors

<i>Var.: Other System Actor</i>		<i>Executive Level Cohort average per annum contacts</i>			<i>ANOVA F-test</i>
		<i>ADMs</i>	<i>DMs</i>	<i>EXL3</i>	<i>p.</i>
001	My deputy minister	356.55	0.48	74.16	p = .0001
007	Others at my rank in the department	332.39	90.00	417.24	p = .0004
026	Members of my principal profession	220.65	144.88	286.03	p = .5820
011	My minister's office	194.61	834.00	49.18	p = .0001
030	Private citizens	173.40	447.69	218.56	p = .0295
008	Peers in other departments	105.54	161.31	99.06	p = .2041
025	Associations or interest groups	71.58	114.85	67.99	p = .2901
027	CEOs, private firms	66.62	143.96	39.38	p = .0606
028	Managers, private firms	64.39	124.00	87.84	p = .3827
002	My assistant deputy minister(s)	60.63	595.36	343.77	p = .0001
010	My minister	45.52	266.00	13.10	p = .0001
024	Local government officials	42.12	36.77	58.69	p = .7081
022	Officials of the federal government	39.27	23.65	30.29	p = .6874
003	Treasury Department officials	36.82	62.50	93.78	p = .2844
023	Officials of other provincial governments	35.35	24.62	23.94	p = .5750
004	PAO departmental officials	27.05	13.42	8.37	p = .0070
019	Local government politicians	17.01	25.46	8.53	p = .1574
006	FIGA officials	13.24	16.58	6.49	p = .0609
014	Government backbenchers	11.97	35.12	5.30	p = .0001
013	Other ministers' offices	11.00	68.62	7.46	p = .0001
005	Executive council officials	10.53	35.65	6.90	p = .0018
029	Labour (extragovernmental)	7.22	6.88	3.93	p = .7303
012	Other ministers	6.92	50.69	1.98	p = .0002
020	The ombudsman	3.27	6.08	4.51	p = .5568
021	Members of the judiciary	2.38	1.81	7.89	p = .2200
015	Opposition party MLAs	2.06	6.35	1.57	p = .0004
016	Legislative Assembly committee	1.64	3.96	0.83	p = .0359
017	Caucus committees	1.53	1.31	1.09	p = .8555
018	Federal MPs and senators	1.41	1.38	1.43	p = .9990
009	The premier	1.39	9.12	0.49	p = .0025

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communicator inquiry also provides a preliminary insight into the verity of Proposition 5/Corollary 3 (Subordinates as Principal Agents of External Liaison).

Table 4-7 displays the average executive level cohort per annum interactions of more than 30 key system actors. Interaction is defined as being a two-way communication. The table also displays probability coefficients generated from F-test statistical comparisons which show statistically significant differences in the frequency of interaction among the three executive level cohorts. The system actors are listed in descending order on the basis of the frequency of their annual interactions with ADMs.

Table 4-7 shows first that the cohorts are statistically distinguished at the $p \leq .05$ level in their frequency of interactions with 12 system actors.²⁷ Some of the relationships are what one might expect, while other ones are surprises. For example, the lower (average) number of deputy ministers' interactions with others at their own rank within their departments seems logical, as only the Treasury Department has two officials holding the deputy ministerial title. In this case, although it is surprising that deputy ministers register an average of 90 contacts a year, there is an explanation. Heads of boards and commissions, who are classified at the senior officer level, report to the same minister and are therefore often regarded as being within the same department. Indeed, the boards and commissions often have informal administrative reporting relationships to the departmental administration, and are often called upon to deal with the departmental deputy minister to coordinate policy activities. Deputies operating under these circumstances would list contacts with these senior officer level peers.

The breadth and frequency of interactions with other actors is easily seen in table 4-7. Simple counting reveals that deputy ministers register the highest per annum interactions with 18 of the 30 key system actors. In ten instances interaction differences

²⁷ As an aside, they are statistically distinguished in 16 instances where the confidence level is $p = .10$.

among the three levels of administrators is statistically significant at $p \leq .05$. ADMs have the highest interactions in six cases, with two (my deputy minister, PAO departmental officials) being significant at $p \leq .05$. Third level executives register the highest interaction averages in six instances, with one (others at my own rank in the department) being significant at $p \leq .05$. The statistical distinctions do not indicate that the actors with the highest average interactions are differentiated from the other cohorts. It is assumed that there is at least one statistically significant distinction between the three cohorts.

One can deduce that deputy ministers meet the first criterion of functioning as 'the core communication channel in the department, since they have frequent interactions with the broadest range of key actors. What is not entirely clear, although much can be deduced from table 4-7 coefficients, is how they are distinguished in their relationships with actors that "count." ADMs and their subordinates are less clearly distinguished in their interactions, as there are nearly the same numbers of cases in which a statistical distinction exists between the cohorts.

Table 4-8 provides a statistical comparison of ADM and deputy minister daily and weekly contacts with key actors. The daily and weekly frameworks are introduced to focus the perspective. Daily and weekly contacts are presumably the most intense, although their selection is arbitrary. Officials' weekly and daily interactions are presumed to be the most intense and consume considerable time and mental energy. Daily interactions are defined as those reported to occur 220 or more times per annum. Weekly interactions are equal to or greater than 51 times per annum, and less than 220 times.²⁸

A distinction is made in table 4-8 between actors that "count" and others. Those who count are deemed to have direct or substantial indirect bearing on administrative matters and policy decisions that are central to senior bureaucrats' job practices. Multiple

²⁸Fifty-one weeks are defined instead of 52 to allow inclusion of deputy minister interactions with other ministers.

Table 4-8.—Comparison of ADM and Deputy Ministerial Daily and Weekly Interactions, and Revelations Concerning Actors that “Count” and Other Key System Actors

<i>System Actors</i>	<i>Executive Level Cohort average annual contacts</i>		<i>Multiple Regression Values</i>		
	ADMs	DMs	t-value	p.	Adj. R ²
<u>Daily Interactions</u>					
(a) actors that “count”					
010 My minister	45.52	266	11.38	.0001	.44
011 My minister’s office	195	834	7.40	.0001	.27
(b) other key actors					
001 My deputy minister	357	0.5	6.46	.0001	.27
007 Others at my rank in the department	332	90	3.02	.0028	.06
030 Private citizens	173	447	2.67	.0081	.03
002 My assistant deputy minister(s)	61	595	6.91	.0001	.23
<u>Weekly Interactions</u>					
(a) actors that “count”					
011 My minister’s office	195	834	7.40	.0001	.27
003 Treasury Department officials	37	61	.48	.6343	.01
013 Other ministers’ offices	11	69	4.74	.0001	.09
012 Other ministers	7	51	3.80	.0002	.07
(b) other key actors					
026 Members of my principal profession	221	145	.53	.5951	.01
030 Private citizens	173	447	2.67	.0081	.03
025 Associations or interest groups	72	115	1.44	.1512	.01
008 Peers in other departments	106	161	1.60	.1114	.01
027 CEOs, private firms	67	144	1.73	.0746	.02
028 Managers, private firms	64	124	1.33	.1856	.01
002 My assistant deputy minister(s)	61	595	6.91	.0001	.23

regression derived statistics are calculated using the three executive management cohorts. T-test values and probability coefficients are calculated for ADM and deputy minister comparisons; the adjusted R-squared value is calculated for three cohort populations.

In table 4-8, ADM daily contacts are limited to a small constituency: their deputy minister and others at the same rank in the department. From the reports of third tier officials' interactions with ADMs, it is also evident that ADMs are in daily contact with executive level subordinates although these results are not displayed on the table.²⁹ An examination of deputy ministers shows they have daily contact with the minister's office, departmental ADMs, private citizens, and the minister.

When comparing the actors with whom ADMs and deputies interact on a daily basis, first, the nub of ADM interactions is restricted to members of the administrative executive cohort in the department—i.e., the deputy, executive subordinates, and ADM peers. The deputy minister displays a similar pattern on the vertical communication axis with daily ministerial and ADM contacts.

Second, deputy ministers are distinguished from ADMs in their daily contacts with private citizens. Their high levels of contact reveal an intense, public extra-organizational orientation to the deputy minister job that is not found with the ADM position. This strengthens the notion that deputy ministers act as the core communication channels in the department.

Third, the deputy ministers' interactions with the minister and the minister's office in contrast with the ADMs' lack of daily interactions suggests there is a qualitative difference in ADM and deputy interactions with critical policy actors. The deputy ministers' interactions with the minister are the most statistically solid finding on the

²⁹ The average interaction that tier three officials report dealing with "my assistant deputy minister(s)" is 343.77; however, in that the tier three officials are only reporting their own interactions, and since the number of tier three officials reporting to an ADM is often more than one, logic would have ADMs interacting with tier three officials on a nearly constant basis.

table, rating an adjusted R-squared value of .44. Moreover, since the ministerial office is often contacted by the deputy minister in lieu of making personal contacts with the minister, a combination of the two statistics may provide a better indication of the frequency with which deputies relate upwards. When this is done, there is no doubt that deputy ministers have a uniquely powerful orientation toward the minister.

Fourth, the data reveal that a high level of interaction occurs among ADMs in the same department. The interaction on this scalar dimension suggests a key intradepartmental, interdivisional linkage role for ADMs. It also suggests that there is a strong working, if not collegial, bond between ADMs. Strong intradepartmental ties are predicted by Corson and Paul, who portray supporting staff managers as active in their relations with departmental peers (see Proposition 9/Corollary 1b), and who also claim that program managers actively liaise with departmental peers, albeit somewhat less actively than staff managers (see Proposition 9/Corollary 3a). The statistical evidence of daily interactions supports the propositions.

Actors with whom ADMs have weekly contacts are the minister's office, peers in other departments, and a host of extragovernmental special interest actors, including private citizens, CEOs, managers of private firms, and representatives of interest groups. Deputy ministers have weekly contacts with a number of the same actors, including association and interest group representatives, private sector CEOs and managers, members of their profession, and peers in other departments. Deputies deal on a weekly basis with other ministers' offices, other ministers, and Treasury Department officials, while ADMs do not.

Consideration of the weekly interaction statistics on table 4-8 bolsters the observation that deputy ministers interact with greater frequency than do ADMs with a range of actors that count. Added to the list of frequent deputy minister interactions are their dealings with other ministers and ministerial offices. As can be readily observed

when comparing ADM and deputy ministerial statistics concerning these relationships, ADMs average low interactions with these key actors. There are slight differences between deputy ministers and ADMs in their weekly dealings with CEOs, but not with Treasury officials. ADMs and deputy ministers are not statistically distinguished in their interactions with members of their profession, association and interest group representatives, peers in other departments, or private firm managers, although the average frequency with which deputy ministers relate to these cohorts is higher.

By and large, insofar as ADMs and deputies are concerned, these findings support Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect) that maintains the higher the bureaucratic station, the closer it becomes to the centres of administrative and political power. The findings also have positive implications for Proposition 6/Corollary 3 (Deputy as Gatekeeper of Ministerial Access), which deals with deputy ministers being the nexus of departmental communications.

The notion of executive level officials actively engaging extradepartmental actors is made consistently in the literature. Therefore it is not surprising that Proposition 5/Corollary 2 (Essential Communication Tasks) is partially supported by the data on daily and weekly ADM system contacts. Central to the corollary is that ADMs promote the organization's messages, products, and services to clients, subordinates, and superiors. With daily and weekly contacts with actors in all of these categories, the notion gains plausibility. Corollaries of Proposition 9 state the case more directly in predicting frequent interactions with extradepartmental actors. Statistical analyses of particulars relevant to these corollaries are found in chapter 5.

Table 4-9 compares ADMs and third tier executives much in the same way as is done with ADMs and deputy ministers in table 4-8. Table 4-9 reveals that tier three officials interact daily with people in their department, members of their profession, and their ADMs. Of interest is that these intensive contacts show essentially the same array as

Table 4-9.—Comparison of ADM and Third Tier Executives Daily and Weekly Interactions, and Revelations Concerning Actors that “Count” and Other Key System Actors

<i>System Actors</i>	<i>Executive Level Cohort average annual contacts</i>		<i>Multiple Regression Values</i>		
	ADMs	EXL3	t-value	p.	Adj. R ²
<u>Daily Interactions</u>					
(a) actors that “count”					
001 My deputy minister	357	74	7.84	.0001	.2700
(b) other key actors					
026 Members of my principal profession	220	286	.69	.4890	.0040
007 Others at my rank in the department	332	417	1.59	.1124	.0600
002 My assistant deputy minister(s)	61	344	5.59	.0001	.2200
<u>Weekly Interactions</u>					
(a) actors that “count”					
001 My deputy minister	357	74	7.84	.0001	.2700
011 My minister’s office	195	49	2.54	.0119	.2700
003 Treasury Department officials	37	94	1.59	.1132	.0020
(b) other key actors					
026 Members of my principal profession	220	286	.69	.4890	-.0040
030 Private citizens	173	219	.66	.5075	.0200
008 Peers in other departments	106	99	.28	.7795	.0100
025 Associations or interest groups	72	68	.18	.8571	.0030
027 CEOs, private firms	67	40	.96	.3403	.0200
028 Managers, private firms	64	88	.79	.4300	.0001
002 My assistant deputy minister(s)	61	344	5.59	.0001	.2200
024 Local government officials	42	59	.73	.4659	-.0000

those reported for ADMs. Like ADMs, tier three officials have daily contacts with their immediate superiors and with coworkers at the same grade. Data are not available on tier three interactions with subordinates. There is little difference between ADMs and tier

three officials' contacts with members of their professions. As an aside, for both cohorts these relationships consume considerable time.

ADMs and their subordinates differ strongly in their contacts with deputy ministers, with the ADMs having much higher levels of interaction. Although third tier officials average weekly dealings with their departmental deputy ministers, and are therefore in frequent contact with them, the principal line of communication unquestionably runs through the ADM. Also important is that ADM weekly contacts with the minister's office are substantially different from those of tier three officials, with ADMs having higher levels of contact. These findings support the hierarchy corollary (Proposition 1/Corollary 2).

Tier three officials enjoy higher levels of contacts with Treasury Department officials, although they are not statistically distinguished from ADMs in these interactions. Tier three and DM interactions with Treasury officials are the rare instance where an interaction with actors that count does not conform to the hierarchical corollary (Proposition 1/Corollary 2).

Although ADMs average higher levels of contacts with CEOs than tier three officials, tier three officials average more frequent contacts with managers of private firms. This suggests a scalar protocol; however, caution must be exercised, since bureaucrats are not statistically distinguished in these interactions. Tier three officials average higher levels of interaction with local government officials, but again are not distinguished from ADMs. Neither are they distinguished in their interactions with association and interest group representatives nor with peers in other departments.

The data in table 4-9 cast doubt on the validity of Proposition 5/Corollary 3 (Subordinates as Principal Agents of External Liaison). The corollary maintains that tier three officials are more actively involved than ADMs in building and maintaining external client networks, and suggests tier three officials are more actively involved

across departmental lines. Regression analysis does not sustain the proposition, although tier three officials average higher incidences of interaction with certain extragovernmental cohorts.³⁰

Table 4-9 evidence reveals that ADMs are the nexus of divisional communications in that they have stronger ties to actors that count, including those with the minister, wherein they are significantly differentiated from their subordinates. ADMs differ from tier three executive in ministerial interactions (t -value = 2.52, p = .0124). Importantly, however, ADMs do not differ from tier three officials in their interactions on the horizontal communication axis, nor do they have more numerous interactions with greater numbers of system actors. It might be argued that ADMs qualitatively differ from tier three officials in their relationships with peers in other departments, as ADMs' peers serve in higher stations. Nonetheless, there are no other notable distinctions on the horizontal communication axis.

To the foregoing statistical account can be added commentary that provides important perspectives on the general conclusions derived from survey data. Managing upward communications is cited consistently by ADM interviewees as being one of the most significant contributions made by officials at their level. This applies not only to policy communications but also to all manner of communication. A recently promoted ADM related:

There is only so much that you can write on memos...and sometimes I wonder does [the deputy] really want to know? As I have grown into this job [I have found] there are certain things that, well, that you have to make judgements on and you hope that you do not make a mistake...[and] you say [to yourself], "Ah, the deputy doesn't

³⁰ This differentiation according to rank is also found in Atkinson and Coleman and, as is the case with the present study, their findings point to contact between all levels of officialdom and business executives, but also a higher propensity for senior officials to deal with senior corporate officials. See Michael Atkinson and William Coleman, "Bureaucrats and Politicians in Canada: An Examination of the Political Administration Model," *Comparative Political Studies* 18, no. 1 (June 1985): 69.

need to know this," or, "Well, yeah, he had better know this one." You are continually trying to draw that line.³¹

This observation was repeated in other interviews in various ways, and offers direct evidence to support Proposition 3/Corollary 1 (Judgement), wherein ADMs exercise an extra quotient of judgement pertaining to organizational and extra-organizational matters. This also supports Proposition 5/Corollary 4 (ADM as Arbiter of Conflicts) to the extent that this observation extends to conflicts. Obviously, the statement confirms a gatekeeper role for the ADM.

An important aspect of managing upward information flow is to ensure that the form of the message is constructed so that it can be digested easily by the deputy and minister. While deputy ministers have a role in the vetting of communications, and can be considered to be the principal arbiters of information and policy recommendations flowing from the department to the minister and government, ADMs have a key role in shaping communications. This point is found in an interview with a long-serving ADM employed in a small protection and development of human resources department.

ECL: Do you find yourself receiving technical information, reports, and proposals from your staff and having to translate or alter them so that they can be passed on?

ADM: There's definitely a translation function. I think you have hit on a difference between the director level and the ADM. Directors tend to come up in their own technical language and the ADM tends to translate it...into something more understandable for not only the political side, but also the external world generally. One of the problems that one constantly runs into is the wording of directives and this kind of thing that are written at relatively low levels within the organization and don't get the proper message across to the people who are receiving them. There is this translation function that goes on. It can happen to an extent at the level below, but I think if you're defining a policy, or most anything at the level of policy statement, the translating almost inevitably happens at the ADM level.

ECL: What is the difference, then, between the ADM level and the DM level in that regard?

³¹ Official 332, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 10 April 1991.

ADM: A paper that comes to the DM is expected to be in a form that can be passed directly to the minister without [much in the way] of the DM's input. [Where there is input, it is usually], "You've missed a little here," or "No, I wanted this added as well," but the DM would rarely take it and redo it.

ECL: But at your level you found that you would.

ADM: Depending on the ability of the people that reported to me. Some people are naturals, they're going to get it right, and one day they're going to be in your job. Others, no, they function very well at their level, but this isn't something that they do well. I think the ADM has to.³²

A policy ADM within an economic development department provides additional evidence when speaking of his role in the upward communication process:

Where we are given projects by the deputy, I will assign to one of my directors...and they'll work through it in terms of doing all the background work and also making sure that the follow-through, the legislation or whatever, you know, is in fairly good shape. They'll come back to me—I do have to do a vetting process before it goes to the deputy. Basically, I like to feel that virtually anything that leaves my desk will just be accepted by the deputy...that he'll get a nice, neat, tidy package rather than having to make decisions back and forth. To the greatest extent possible I try and ensure that my people do the work and do it to my satisfaction. And if it's to my satisfaction, it will be to [the deputy's] and ultimately to the minister's.³³

Many of those interviewed subscribed to the idea that ADMs are expected to act as proxies for their deputies. This is the case to the extent that in framing communication it is the ADMs, not their subordinates, who are expected to ensure that information produced for the deputy and the minister gets to them with minimal revision. Several ADMs commented that this requirement fell to them because those below do not have the exposure to the minister or deputy that sensitized them to governmental and departmental corporate requirements. ADMs also stated that given their deputy minister's time commitments and distance from the particulars of operational activities, it became the ADM's responsibility to translate information into a form that could easily flow into the higher policy machinery. These comments speak to a qualitatively different ADM

³² Official 342, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 12 June 1991.

³³ Official 500, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 3 May 1991.

judgement quotient (Proposition 3/Corollary 1) and suggest there is an important division between the ADM and subordinate managers.

Although nearly all ADMs interviewed spoke of the importance of managing the upward flow of information, the manner by which it is done varies. As implied in the foregoing quotations, most ADMs rely heavily on their subordinate staff to produce the proposals and reports on matters of policy and reserve for themselves the role of arbiter of content, style, and whether or not the information is sent upward in the organization. In most instances this arbiter role is exercised through a fluid and close working relationship with the ADM's managerial staff. Oversight is exercised in numerous discussions wherein elements of a policy proposal are discussed and shaped well before the final product is delivered. Although the closeness of the working relationship is often a matter of an ADM's management style, the general interactive process is largely the rule. This process is discussed by a senior ADM in a large natural resource department:

[In meetings with my directors we will discuss a new idea or requirement and the directors] will go away and come back with a piece.... We'll talk about it and I'll say, "You know, guys, we tried something like this a few years ago and that part of it didn't fly for these reasons. And you know, when we tried something else over there along this track, it didn't work for these reasons." So they go back and they'll tune it up. This might happen four or five times. Then when I take it to executive committee, I have to explain it to all of these other folks, the other ADMs and the deputy who know nothing about it. I explain [the proposal] to them, and get their input. The deputy might say, "Taking this part of it, it's not going to fly, go away." I take this back to the shop and work it again with the directors.... We work that whole thing back to executive committee again; that may happen two or three times; it may only happen once.³⁴

There are instances where the ADM functions more as an independent assayer of policy proposals coming from the ranks. This appears to be most prevalent in departments where there is a highly technical and professional cadre of administrative

³⁴ Official 184, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 1 May 1991.

officers as well as a need on the part of the government to exercise policy control over the profession. As one ADM states:

I do a screening function, there is certainly a screening function that is involved. It may be a little different for those who are in departments that are larger than ours. You will get a guy that says, "What Alberta needs is a [project requiring considerable government funding]. If we build this in Alberta, industry will flock to here." And so, you often have to be a devil's advocate. You have to really probe to make sure that advocates have really done their homework. You realize that once you put your name on [the advocate's idea] it is an official, live proposal. Before it was simply somebody's skunk works thing.³⁵

Operating in this situation, this ADM's approach is to:

...create the environment where [the advocates] can make [their] own case. I am neutral. And you will see what the court of justice [the departmental executive committee] says. But there is some of that, but I would not go so far as to say I was involved in protecting the organization from my division.... Mind you, you are dealt a certain set of cards in terms of who is working for you. And it is like anything else, you realize that there is a whole unique series of agendas out there and a whole multitude of people.³⁶

The foregoing discussion of the ADM role in managing upward communications generally supports the idea that ADMs apply an extra quotient of judgement and act as communications gatekeepers. With ADMs appearing to be as much concerned over the form of communications as the content, it raises the question of whether or not it is only professionals who convert technical information and ideas into understandable form (Proposition 9/Corollary 2, Distinguishing Characteristics of Managers of Professionals).

The comments also suggest that the ADM is largely a consumer of ideas and proposals (Proposition 4/Corollary 4: ADMs as Consumers of Ideas and Proposals). As well, they provide insight into the close working relationship that ADMs have with their subordinates, an idea implied in the corollary.

The importance of pushing messages down into the organization features large in the federal government profile's description of the ADM role. It is also stressed in other

³⁵ Official 501, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 3 May 1993.

³⁶ Ibid.

commentary on executive activity, and is captured in Proposition 5/Corollary 2(b). Many ADMs commented on this aspect of their job and said that transmitting and selling ideas coming from the governmental and executive level is important. The point is captured in the following exchange:

ECL: What about communicating governmental policy and direction down into the organization?

ADM: Oh, that's important, too. I think the ADM has to be an interpreter. A lot of times he has to communicate down in a way which somehow, with his experience and knowledge of his staff, will be accepted. You have to be a salesman. Sell ideas downwards; it has to do with morale and all those good things in an organization.³⁷

A similar sentiment is expressed by an ADM responding to a question on the centrality of communicating the essence of policy and prescript coming from on high:

One of the critical things...in government...[is to] roll the planning down so that there's an understanding at the grass roots, if you like, as to what the overall government direction is, and the department's role in the direction. People are far more comfortable if they know if what they are doing...lines up with the big picture. I think the idea of people beaver away in their own little area and not caring whether or not it's relevant or not, if it was ever true, certainly is not true today. It's not just the Japanese style...[it's] the way people are. They want to feel that they are part of something larger and that what they're doing is, in fact, contributing to something worthwhile. So, it's important that they have that larger picture—this includes clerical support staff, it includes everybody. [To promote this general understanding] takes work...you've got to do it in ways that are relevant to them, which means that in some instances there is a relatively simple kind of explanation, but it still has to be done. It pays off in terms of better morale, it pays off in terms of people being more interested in what they're doing.³⁸

More will be said on communicating messages down into the organization when addressing the ADM leadership role.

Communication practices on the horizontal axis exhibit certain similarities with those practices on the vertical axis. Much of the information that ADMs choose not to pass on to the deputy and minister is garnered from these horizontal links. In these

³⁷ Official 492, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 10 June 1991.

³⁸ Official 83, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 2 May 1991.

circumstances judgement has to be applied in determining precisely what is in the department, ministry, and government interest lest the minister be caught by surprise. A veteran ADM with responsibility for a large, regionalized program delivery division describes the process as one of "fending off" when he and his regional staff seek to resolve matters involving people with political influence. A number of officials interviewed stated that managing such relationships without relying on the deputy's or minister's intervention, or without their knowledge, is a valuable contribution made by the ADM. As one ADM states:

Really, you're doing a job which I don't think is recognized by the government.... Ministers probably feel overwhelmed with the number of calls that they get, but I think what they don't recognize is that they may be hearing from about one to two percent of the concerns.³⁹

He adds that there is a "politics" to this, a politics which appears to be very much like that of the Image III bureaucrat who, Aberbach and his colleagues maintain, works to sustain and defend sectoral relationships.

The statistical evidence on interactions with CEOs and managers of private firms cited above reveals similar frequencies of communication at the ADM and tier three level. However, evidence of a qualitative scalar protocol does emerge from ADMs' descriptions of their work. In speaking of handling initial representations from senior business executives and other governments, one ADM relates:

The ADM is usually the lowest level [of the executive ranks that] people accept. Below that you are considered to be sloughing them off. So even with an ADM you have to be careful as to who it is. If it is a visiting minister you are often too low.⁴⁰

Interestingly, the sense of the interviews is that once relationships between a department and a nongovernmental organization are normalized, it may be a third tier executive as much as an ADM who is designated as the department's liaison agent for

³⁹ Official 211, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 28 May 1991.

⁴⁰ Official 501, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 3 May 1991.

ongoing exchanges. One reason for this is that lower level officials are often more knowledgeable about the technical matters that form the basis for ongoing bureaucratic relationships. Third level executives appear to be both technically expert and sufficiently high on the departmental masthead to meet protocol and technical requirements inherent in these relationships. A second reason is that the department is often in a position to dictate the level of officialdom which is to deal with external parties. There is apparently some symmetry to this handing-off behaviour, since several officials commented that once working relationships are cemented by officials in collaborating organizations, handing down work responsibilities often occurs as a normal matter of procedure among all parties. This sustains the scalar logic, and leaves important "appeal" and dispute resolution prerogatives open for the ADMs and their organization counterparts.

Circumstances have a bearing on who deals with whom. While this feature of horizontal relationships is mentioned by only a few ADMs in passing comments, ADMs appear to take control back from their subordinates when a relationship takes on an increased importance to the department or when relationships with an extragovernmental actor become problematic. The essence of this is revealed in the following exchange:

ECL: What type of division of responsibility is there between you and your staff when it comes to relating to outside client organizations and interest groups? Do you reserve certain consultations onto yourself? Do your staff have regular interactions with these groups.... Is it at a different level than your contacts?

ADM: They certainly do [have their own consultations], but generally, at a more nuts and bolts level. If you take the division as a whole...there's a lot more consultation that goes on with them than with me but it's not going to be comparable. Even though we don't have a rigid or formal division of powers in that sense, I've tried—especially once I got comfortable in the job and with the responsibilities that were involved over the last few years—to keep away from what could be construed as consulting about a particular problem of a particular company. If I do get involved in something like that, I try to involve or shift the discussion to the particular consultant or director involved so that they can deal with

it... My interest is in keeping track of what it all means in the broader context, and whether there is an impact that ought to be reflected in policy.⁴¹

In this case the ADM's intervention is to correct a problem and set relations back on an even keel. Proposition 5/Corollary 4 (ADM as Arbiter of Conflicts) gain credence in these observations, for certainly if the relationships are not managed by the ADM, prospects are high that they will find their way to the deputy or ministerial levels.

ADMs also report being heavily involved in dealings with extragovernmental actors during start-up phases of new policy initiatives or during an important departmental change. They are not alone, as the deputy and third tier executives are also deployed in carrying the departmental message to the field; however, ADMs often assume the heaviest burden given their seniority, availability, and the authority with which they speak. Indeed, as they describe it, ADMs are often the most prominent officials in promoting major policy initiatives and change. In part this is because such initiatives are generated from their offices and because they are the highest level of officials that can be deployed for such duty.

There is an analog between deputy ministerial corporate responsibility representing the government and ADMs' corporate responsibility in representing the department and minister. When ADMs are called upon to represent the departmental executive collectivity to extradepartmental audiences, they speak before them and listen to groups on behalf of the minister or deputy, or sometimes on behalf of another ADM. An ADM relates:

Because the deputy does not have the time and neither does the minister—you end up being the guy who is leading the forces and who is speaking for the department, or talking for the deputy. Sometimes you are talking for him even when he does not know you are talking for him, because you haven't got time to communicate with him...but you have got to make a decision and you go cover your bases later. You may go up to the deputy [later] and say, "Look, I had to do it this way," and hope

⁴¹ Official 96, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 30 April 1991.

like hell that he agrees. But a lot of times...you go talk to the deputy and he says, "I think we should go this way," and you go carry it out and you are carrying it out for the deputy.⁴²

It is worth noting that officials lower in the hierarchy also speak on behalf of the department and the minister in their interactions with outside actors. However, ADMs are distinguished from these officials in that they are assumed to speak directly for the minister or deputy. In short, lower level officials speak to the policy of the department but not directly for the minister or deputy, while ADMs speak on behalf of the minister. These observations support Proposition 8 (Corporate Responsibilities), which posits that ADMs possess corporate responsibilities that extend beyond their immediate responsibilities to manage their line organization. They also can be usefully considered along with commentary in the previous section to further round out the picture of ADM corporate responsibilities.

Although a scalar protocol may be somewhat loosely honoured in relationships with outside constituencies, greater formality is observed in interdepartmental interactions. ADMs normally communicate directly with their counterparts in other departments. This pattern is a familiar one within bureaucracies, since if it is not honoured, subordinate officials are placed at a disadvantage. But there are limitations. Some assistant deputies interviewed note that they have regular contacts with officials at the director level in other departments, but quickly add that they normally occur when a working relationship has developed and the interaction is approved by the ADM's opposite number.

An exception to this scalar arrangement is in relations with the Treasury Department, as departmental ADMs rarely find themselves dealing directly with Treasury ADMs. Usually the departmental ADM's relationship is at the director level in the

⁴² Official 332, interview by author. Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 10 April 1991.

Treasury, although there is evidence of regular contact at the junior budget analyst level, which is several levels below that of the ADM on the classification grid. A similar redrawing of scalar lines occurs at the tier three executive level, as there is intense interaction between the department and Treasury budget analysts. This observation suggests that the previously reported anomaly in the norm of hierarchically defined relationships with actors "that count" involving executive officials' interactions with Treasury bureaucrats may not be so anomalous after all. ADM interactions with Treasury officials are less frequent than those of their subordinates, but this has to be understood in light of their subordinates' relationships with lower level Treasury Department officialdom. Those to whom their subordinates relate within the Treasury may "count," but perhaps not as much as those with whom ADMs deal.

As a rule, horizontal communications flow in strata and, significantly, within these strata the character of the discourse differs. ADMs are exposed to more political content in the daily routine of their jobs and tend to communicate perspectives on governmental policy to one another more candidly than with lower level officials. These candid exchanges between ADMs are an important source of key insights into government policy and direction. Moreover, ADMs make it clear that they exploit these channels for this purpose. Perspective on the deputy as well as the ADM position is imparted by this deputy's comment:

DM: I thought the [interdepartmental] dialogue was fairly good at the ADM level before, but I find that it's even more easily undertaken at a DM level. That the views from my colleagues tend to be more candid and the information I get from them is less information of a government line, and far more opinion oriented.

ECL: What's your view of why this candour is higher at that level?

DM: Well, I think there is more trust. I think there is a feeling that if you've been placed in this position that you've earned the trust of a number of people. There's

also a feeling of we're all in this together and we need to help each other out and I get that sense increasingly the longer I'm in this job.⁴³

This observation supports Proposition 6/Corollary 2 (Political Content) wherein deputy ministers are presumed to be closer to the political domain and privy to greater political intelligence. It also obliquely introduces the importance of trust in interactions among officials, albeit in this instance at the deputy level.

In conclusion, the core idea of Proposition 5 is that the ability to communicate is the most significant skill ADMs possess as they work with many system actors. If the evidence does not strictly support the stricture that effective communication is the *most* significant skill possessed by ADMs, there is little doubt that it is one of the most important skills, as ADMs communicate with many system actors in the normal course of their work. Moreover, much hangs on the ADMs' ability to fashion communications and have their messages heard.

Comparisons between the ADM and the deputy minister support Osbaldeston's contention that the deputy is the nexus of departmental communications. Deputies interact more frequently than ADMs and tier three officials with a great many key system actors. This is apparent when daily and weekly contacts are examined. Deputies are also more oriented toward the minister, minister's office, and other political officials than ADMs. This gives support to Proposition 6/Corollary 3 (Deputy as Gatekeeper of Ministerial Access), and supports Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect). Further evidence of the hierarchical effect is found when ADM ministerial and ministerial office contacts are examined.

ADMs are at the nexus of divisional communications, although their claim to this status is not the same as the deputy's is at the department level. ADMs are most obviously the nexus of divisional communications because they deal more readily with

⁴³ Official 448, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 23 May 1993.

actors that count. This finding supports the hierarchical effect corollary. ADMs differ little on statistical measures from their subordinates in their dealings with other system actors, although interviews show that there are important qualitative differences in ADM relationships with other system actors.

In general, ADMs are expected to initiate important relationships, and often hand routine relationships to their subordinates. Within and between departments the normal pattern is for horizontal communications to follow a scalar protocol, although there are exceptions, such as those which occur between Treasury officials and departmental executives. While extragovernmental communications between private sector representatives do not always appear to honour the same scalar protocols, ADMs are more readily involved than their subordinates in developing links with key senior personnel during the start-up phase of a relationship. For reasons of efficiency, or simply because they are in a position to do it, ADMs often hand “files” to subordinates who maintain the relationship and deal with substantive matters.

The failure for ADMs and third tier officials to be statistically differentiated in interactions with extradepartmental actors places Proposition 5/Corollary 3 (Subordinates as Principal Agents of External Liaison) in question. The fact that ADM interactions on the horizontal axis are qualitatively more significant raises additional questions. ADMs are clearly involved in building alliances, while third tier bureaucrats are shouldered with the burden of maintaining them. Thus one can speculate that ADMs also maintain certain relationships with more senior personnel. ADMs usurp subordinate officials’ files when trouble brews, which is an arbiter of conflict function (Proposition 5/Corollary 4).

ADMs refine, distill, and meter information flowing downward and thus Proposition 5/Corollary 2 (Essential Communication Tasks), which concerns their active role in communicating to subordinates, is supported. By their own accounts ADMs must rely on deputy ministerial interpretations of governmental and ministerial views and

directions. This is true even though they average almost weekly contacts with their minister ($\mu = 45.52$), and have even more frequent contacts with the minister's office ($\mu = 194.61$). Interviews indicate that these ministerial contacts are not frequent enough for the ADMs' liking and thus they seek information from peers to help round out the picture.

Managing the upward flow of information is a crucial feature of the ADM job. ADMs are a key quality control agent for communications which move from the branch and division level to the department and political executive. The observation supports Proposition 6/Corollary 6 (ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice). Part of this quality control concerns the form of communications and proposals. This is the "translator" role in which communications are drafted in a form that can be easily understood by the executive, deputy, and the minister. As stated above, translating and refining communications in this fashion appears to be more ubiquitous than suggested in Proposition 9/Corollary 2, which singles out managers of professionals as the cohort which is especially concerned with such matters. While these officials might be distinguished by this task within the Government of Alberta, program and administrative ADMs also perform it as a regular part of their duties. Value-add also involves the application of judgement as to the timing and content of upward communication. ADMs cull the information stream and manage the velocity of the upward flow. This type of judgement is the kind defined in Proposition 3/Corollary 1.

The section 4.1 discussion of ADM briefing memo and background paper preparation raises questions about the verity of Proposition 4/Corollary 4 (ADMs as Consumers of Ideas and Proposals), which maintains that ADMs have little time to produce documents, research matters, and deliberate. Although ADMs reply to ministerial and legislative requests, the broader consideration of upward communications contained in this subsection supports the corollary. ADMs largely appear to be consumers of proposals and documents produced within the organization. While there is little

question that they have a hand in developing and refining key ideas that will progress up the chain of command, they are not the principal researchers or authors.

Ministers and deputy ministers call upon ADMs to represent the department to outside constituencies in a variety of circumstances. This evidence deals with an aspect of corporate responsibility not addressed in section 4.2, and supports an idea that is implicit in Proposition 8 (Corporate Responsibilities). ADMs are privy to information which is more politically sensitive and therefore are assumed to speak for the deputy, the minister, and in some instances, the government. While third level executives may also find themselves in similar circumstances, they are not accorded the same deference as ADMs.

Finally, Proposition 3/Corollary 2 (Executive Management as a Group Process) is verified. Third tier executives report that they interact with ADMs twice daily. ADMs interact with their deputies on average more than daily. They interact on average with peers and members of their principal profession at about the same rate. Thus it is clear that ADMs are in frequent contact with a close group comprised of their superior, subordinates, and peers. The point is brought to life in interview excerpts when officials speak of the iterative approach common to defining upward-bound communications.

(2) Providing Leadership

Chapter 3 defines a number of salient leadership traits and postulates certain differences between ADMs and other executive officials in the performance of leadership activities. This subsection considers ADM leadership more closely and in doing so addresses the leadership propositions and corollaries. It also seeks to develop a rounded picture of ADM leadership activities that examines the ADM role in relation to the deputy minister as well as executive subordinates.

The subsection is organized into two parts. First, there is a statistical inquiry into differences between ADMs and other executive level cohorts based on the section of the

survey instrument dealing with task importance items. The task variables selected for the analysis correspond to, or are elements of, principal leadership tasks defined in chapter 3 propositions and corollaries.

Leadership tasks are factor analyzed and three factors are identified on which the executive level cohorts are compared. The comparisons provide a basis for determining whether ADMs are distinguished from deputies and executive subordinates in the performance of leadership tasks. Additionally, executive level cohorts are compared on individual variables for purposes of substantiating Proposition 4/Corollary 1 (Long-Range Plans), Proposition 4/Corollary 2 (Yearly Performance Objectives), and Proposition 4/Corollary 3 (Assessing Program Effectiveness). All three "administrative" propositions involve aspects of practicing administrative leadership. In all of them it is predicted that there are significant differences between ADMs and their subordinates.

Second, the matter of visionary leadership is investigated using evidence from the interviews. It is stated in chapter 3 that Alberta ADMs are not a source of visionary leadership. The basis for this assertion is the controlling character of the political administration described in chapter 2. Moreover, Alberta deputy ministers are knowledgeable about the business of their departments and involved in setting the strategic direction in their departments, and they enjoy longer tenures of office than their federal counterparts. The combined result of these factors is that while Alberta deputies may act as administrative generalists they are nonetheless more involved in the particulars of their departments than their federal counterparts. Under these circumstances ADMs operate with less free rein than their federal counterparts, and are much more likely to be more closely tied to their deputy's and minister's visionary purposes.

Through seeking evidence of visionary leadership the study touches on ADM judgement (Proposition 3/Corollary 1), other leadership activities (Proposition 2), leadership attributes (Proposition 3), the importance of trust and confidence (Proposition

2/Corollary 4), the importance of substantive knowledge in heading the organization (Proposition 3/Corollary 3), and the notion that executive management is a group process (Proposition 3/Corollary 2). The suitability of the incremental leadership corollary (Proposition 2/Corollary 3) is investigated throughout, as it represents the most logical alternative to visionary leadership. The following leadership tasks found in the leadership and administration propositions and corollaries are logically associated with section 3 survey instrument job tasks:

- Assess subordinates' capacities and improve their potential through training and development.
- Delegate work to subordinates.
- Position, reorient, and reorganize to achieve organizational and governmental objectives.
- Direct the organization's activities to align it with the government's plans and priorities.
- Sustain organizational momentum in pursuit of defined goals.
- Formulate long-range plans.
- Approve yearly program objectives.
- Establish and maintain accountability systems.

Table 4-10 displays three leadership dimensions defined by factor analyzing ADM, deputy, and third tier task importance ratings. The survey tasks are those which most closely correspond to the list derived from chapter 3 propositions and corollaries. In most cases they are tasks performed in the service of the chapter 3 list items. Factor loading coefficients greater than .30 are in boldface for easy reference. Total Variance coefficients featured at the bottom of the table are derived from the sum of the Oblique Solution's direct proportionate and joint proportionate contributions for each factor.

Table 4-10.—Leadership Variables Defined by Factor Analysis of Selected Leadership Tasks (Sample)

<i>Leadership Tasks/Variable</i>	<i>Leadership Factor Loadings⁴⁴</i>		
	(Factor 1) New Initiative Leadership	(Factor 2) Supervisory Leadership	(Factor 3) Organizational Leadership
Develop strategies to implement departmental policies (VAR066).	.04	.16	.35
Assist subordinate managers in setting long-range plans, goals, and objectives (VAR067).	.04	.77	.03
Review or approve subordinates' operational goals and objectives (VAR068).	.10	.79	-.003
Review project/program progress reports (VAR069).	-.09	.75	-.09
Assess the long-range direction of governmental policy in my area of responsibility (VAR070).	.06	.05	-.04
Determine the organizational structure required to meet departmental goals and objectives (VAR085).	-.06	-.10	.84
Plan and implement organizational changes (VAR086).	-.04	.05	.78
Allocate financial resources to projects, capital expenditures (VAR088).	.23	-.02	.50
Approve requests for management training and development (VAR089).	.02	.22	.35
Review or approve requests for feasibility studies (VAR095).	.50	-.08	-.01
Develop strategies for the introduction of programs/services or changes to them (VAR096).	.78	-.02	-.02

⁴⁴ The principal component analysis factor procedure employing the Orthotran/Varimax transformation method defines five factors. Leadership Factor Loadings for each factor are derived from the Oblique Solution Reference Structure in the StatView II statistical package. Oblique Solution factor scores are used in comparative statistical analysis. The total matrix sampling adequacy is .85. Primary Intercorrelation coefficients are: Factor 1/Factor 2, (.36); Factor 1/Factor 3, (.37); Factor 2/Factor 3, (.40). The Variable Complexity coefficient for the Oblique Solution is 1.41.

Table 4-10.—Continued

<i>Leadership Tasks/Variable</i>	<i>Leadership Factor Loadings</i>		
	(Factor 1) New Initiative Leadership	(Factor 2) Supervisory Leadership	(Factor 3) Organizational Leadership
Prepare strategic plans or impact statements (VAR097).	.63	.14	.02
Determine the need to change programs to meet client demands, resource constraints, new policies (VAR098).	.79	.02	-.004
Approve proposals for new, or changes to, program services (VAR099).	.73	.001	.07
Total Variance Explained	.33	.24	.23

Variables 095, 096, 097, 098, and 099 are most prominent on Factor 1. These comprise the sum total of variables featured in the survey instrument's section 3 subsection labeled "Planning Programs and Services." However, the label does not reflect the leadership context of the inquiry, and consequently, the factor is labeled "New Initiative Leadership," which taps the importance ADMs and their executive peers place on spawning and implementing programs and innovations.

Variables 067, 068, and 069 are featured in Factor 2. These are the ensemble of tasks found in the survey instrument's "Preparing Long-Range Plans and Evaluating Programs." In order to reflect the supervisory character of the featured items the factor is labeled "Supervisory Leadership."

Factor 3's most prominent items fall largely within the section 3 subsection "Managing Organizational Resources." The label is somewhat deceptive, for within the context of organizational leadership the subsection tasks involve more than managing resources; they involve deploying strategic organization resources. Therefore, the factor is labeled "Organizational Leadership."

Factor 1, the New Initiative Leadership variable, provides a basis for testing Proposition 2/Corollary 1 (Leadership as Program Direction Setting), which posits that ADMs will have greater responsibilities than their subordinates in setting program direction. Greater ADM responsibilities are also implicitly found in Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect). Therefore, the New Initiative Leadership variable provides an additional test of this proposition.

Table 4-11.—Executive Level Cohorts Compared on New Initiative Leadership Variable

<i>Executive Level Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean⁴⁵</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
ADMs (101)	-.060	-	-	-	-
Deputies (26)	.093	.250	.029	.395	.6930
EXL3 (86)	-.040	.166	.001	.017	.9867
R ² = .001 Adj. R ² = -.009 F-test = .084 p = .9192 N = 215					

Table 4-11 compares the executive level cohorts on the New Initiative Leadership variable using multiple regression analysis. To the extent that the New Initiative Leadership variable tests the provision of program direction, results do not sustain Proposition 2/Corollary 1 (Leadership as Program Direction Setting). That is, ADMs do not differ from subordinates or superiors in their responsibilities for setting program direction. Indeed, none of the executive level cohorts are distinguished from one another on this dimension. This finding also has implications for Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The

⁴⁵ Table 4-11 statistics and those on tables 4-12 and 4-13 are calculated using the standardized data of factor score weights. Consequently, the sample mean coefficients are artefacts of the Oblique transformation solution factor score weighting procedure. As such they should not be read as important scale values. The statistic of note in these cases is that of the standard score coefficient which provides a relative measure of the difference between ADM cohorts' standard score and those of deputies and third tier officials.

Hierarchical Effect), as position in the hierarchy does not appear to be associated with any differences in the performance of these tasks.

It cannot be assumed from table 4-11 results that higher officials actually set program direction, although scores associated with the salient tasks suggest this is the case. All executive cohorts rate these tasks as being highly important. Likewise, it cannot be assumed that the failure to discover statistically significant differences among the cohorts implies ADMs are not distinguished from their subordinates on individual items. For example, they imply but do not prove that the hierarchical distinction in Proposition 4/Corollary 1 (Long-Range Plans) is suspect.

It is possible to test a portion of Proposition 4/Corollary 1—ADMs formulate long-range plans whereas subordinate executive managers formulate medium-range plans—as respondents rated the importance of VAR097, *prepare strategic plans or impact statements*. Using the multiple regression statistic (not shown in tabular form) reveals that there is a significant difference between the three cohorts (F-test = 3.52, $p = .0312$, adjusted R-squared value = .023). Closer analysis shows there is a weak statistical difference between ADMs and tier three members (t-value = 1.66, $p = .098$). A significant difference is registered when comparing deputy ministers and tier three officials (t-value = 2.52, $p = .0124$), while no differences are found between ADMs and deputy ministers. Deputy ministers ($\mu = 4.46$), and ADMs ($\mu = 4.07$) consider preparation of strategic plans and impact statements to be of some importance, while tier three officials consider this task to be less so ($\mu = 3.77$).

Thus, on the strength of this analysis, Proposition 4/Corollary 1 (Long-Range Plans) is weakly supported insofar as it maintains there is a division of labour between ADMs and subordinate executive managers in setting strategic plans. Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect) is supported to the extent that deputy ministers are distinguished from third tier executives in formulating strategic plans.

The verity of Proposition 4/Corollary 3 (Assessing Program Effectiveness) is raised by the failure to discover differences between ADMs and third tier officials on the Initiatives Leadership variable, since *determine the need to change programs to meet client demands, resource constraints, and new policies* (VAR098) is the most heavily weighted leadership task on the Factor 1 dimension. Regression analysis (not shown in tabular form) shows no statistically significant difference between ADMs and tier three officials when compared on VAR098 (t-value, 352, $p = .352$). Moreover, no difference appears between any combination of the executive level cohorts (F-test = $-.841$, $p = .4326$, adjusted R-squared value = $-.001$). To the extent that determining the need to change programs can be equated with assessing program effectiveness, then Proposition 4/Corollary 3 (Assessing Program Effectiveness) is not supported.

Table 4-12 compares executive level cohorts on the Factor 2 Supervisory Leadership variable. The most heavily loaded tasks involve directing or controlling subordinates VAR067, VAR068, and VAR069. Where statistical differences are found between executive cohorts, they provide an indication of the direction and control exercised by officials at one level over another. Likewise, the comparison provides a basis for contemplating the amount of supervision under which ADM and tier three officials operate.

Table 4-12.—Executive Level Cohorts Compared on Supervisory Leadership Variable

<i>Executive Level Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
ADMs (101)	-.064	-	-	-	-
Deputies (26)	-.427	.244	-.106	1.489	.1381
EXL3 (88)	.193	.162	.113	1.586	.1143
$R^2 = .031$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = -.022$ $F\text{-test} = 3.42$ $p = .0345$ $N = 215$					

The table reveals a significant statistical difference between the cohorts (F-test = 3.42, $p = .0345$). The difference of note is not between ADMs and their subordinates, but rather between third tier officials and deputy ministers. Moreover, in contrast to the New Initiative Leadership variable, in this instance it is the tier three official that rates highest and deputies the lowest on the dimension (t-value = 2.503, $p = .0131$).

Table 4-12 implies that ADMs are less directed and controlled than the subordinates of tier three officials. Proposition 1/Corollary 3 is again supported.

Table 4-12 results are suggestive insofar as Proposition 4/Corollary 2 (Yearly Performance Objectives) is concerned—executive managers reporting to ADMs formulate yearly program performance objectives, whereas ADMs approve them—if for no other reason than that VAR068 features so strongly in the factor. A more discriminating test of the corollary is made possible if one compares the executive cohorts on VAR068, *review or approve subordinates' operational goals and objectives*. The analysis (not shown in tabular form) fails to register any significant difference between three executive level cohorts (F-test = .156, $p = .856$, adjusted R-squared value = .001), and as might be expected, no cohort is distinguished from another. Granted, this test does not directly address the corollary but it does provide evidence that ADMs, their subordinates, and their deputies do not differ when it comes to comparing subordinates' operational goals and objectives, which can be construed as being yearly performance objectives. Of greater interest is the high cohort importance score for the task on the five-point scale (deputy ministers, $\mu = 4.31$; ADMs, $\mu = 4.41$; tier three, $\mu = 4.40$). Reviewing and approving operational goals and objectives is an important feature of executive management leadership practice. From this evidence it is assumed that Proposition 4/Corollary 2 (Yearly Performance Objectives) is supported.

Table 4-13.—Executive Level Cohorts Compared on Organizational Leadership Variable

<i>Executive Level Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
ADMs (101)	.031	-	-	-	-
Deputies (26)	.611	.245	.167	2.37	.0187
EXL3 (88)	-.223	.162	-.110	1.56	.1200
$R^2 = .051$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .042$ $F\text{-test} = 5.72$ $p = .0038$ $N = 215$					

Table 4-13 compares executive level cohorts on the Organizational Leadership Variable. This variable focuses on manipulating the organizational structure and controlling organizational resources to achieve desired ends. ADMs are distinguished from their deputies on this variable but not from their subordinates. The difference is the higher deputy ministerial importance found on salient scale items. Thus it can be said that deputy ministers place more emphasis on the manipulation of strategic organizational resources because they are charged with the stewardship of the resources.

Results displayed on table 4-13 do not vitiate Proposition 2/Corollary 3(a) dealing with ADMs' positioning and reorienting the organization to meet emerging trends. If ADM average importance scores are considered for the most salient tasks on the dimension, it is clear that ADMs rate as important VAR085, *determine the organizational structure required to meet departmental goals and objectives* ($\mu = 4.43$ out of a maximum 5.0), and register a nearly equal 4.36 average for VAR086, *plan and implement organizational changes*. These ratings show that directing the organization is important to ADMs. However, as important as these key tasks are for ADMs, they are significantly more important for deputy ministers (VAR085, $\mu = 4.85$; VAR086, $\mu = 4.80$). Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect) is supported by these strong deputy ministerial scores, inasmuch as hierarchy does on this instance appear to affect the nature of tasks performed.

To test whether ADMs provide visionary leadership, interviews are examined with attention to a number of suppositions. The foregoing statistical analysis of ADM leadership tasks provides preliminary insights into the suppositions. Analysis of the interviews offers nuances and addresses matters for which data are not available. The suppositions, written as loosely defined null hypotheses, are as follows:

- ADMs are charged with creating an organizational “vision” which includes defining organizational goals and objectives and defining the program(s) of the organization—although in this later capacity the ADM may rely on subordinates for assistance.
- ADMs are actively involved in selling the vision and the program associated with it to superiors and stakeholders. The ADM is a champion and advocate for the organizational vision and its program(s). The ADM is an entrepreneur seeking license to operate and the resources to affect the program.
- ADMs are charged with instilling the vision and values to members of the organization, and with developing the members of the organization so that they can put the vision into place and sustain it.
- As organizational leaders, ADMs must assume risks to their reputation for championing new programs and administrative strategies.

(a) Setting Vision, Defining Goals, and Spawning Initiatives

An ADM employed in a central agency describes her job as being “an independent and critical force of initiative within the department.” Another ADM managing a large program division within a major natural resource ministry describes himself as being a “source of new strategic initiatives.” A peer in another resource ministry describes the ADM level as the one from which major new initiatives emanate: “the reason that I am in the position is to provide some vision and future direction, some

imagination...to perceive the organization globally rather than technically and specifically."⁴⁶ The official speaks of the ADM as a "sower of seeds," that is, someone who initiates ideas and plans and leaves it to others to cultivate and reap.

These excerpts leave little doubt that some ADMs are a source of program ideas and have a role in defining the strategic direction of their organizations. However, the extent to which ADMs define the divisional "vision," or function as the architects of organizational strategic direction, cannot be assumed to be a universal feature of the ADM role.

Several ADMs interviewed implied that one of the reasons their strategic direction setting was less than suggested by the "vision" vernacular is that they operate in a policy environment where government's goals are often not articulated, or are articulated in much too general terms. This leaves the ADM able only to guess the government's and minister's preferences. One veteran ADM commented that the vagueness of policy pronouncements was "biblical" in character.

An example of operating according to an undeclared policy is provided by the evidence found in two formal inquiries into the financial collapse of the Principal Group.⁴⁷ Alberta's legislation on regulating investment companies was clear; however, the government's policy was not to enforce the legislation energetically, as it was thought that to do so would erode public confidence in the province's financial institutions. Although the Principal Group debacle may be the most publicized example of officialdom operating under an undeclared policy, ADMs interviewed provided many other examples of vague and often unstated government policy. There was a general

⁴⁶ Official 235, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 27 May 1991.

⁴⁷ William E. Code, *Final Report of the Inspector William E. Code Q.C.* (Edmonton: Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta, 18 July 1989); and Alberta, Office of the Ombudsman, *Special Report: The Role of the Provincial Government in the Regulation of The Principal Group of Companies* (Edmonton: n.p., 1989).

consensus among ADMs that it is neither easy nor very wise to construct an organizational "vision."

Another reason suggested in the interviews as to why ADM vision setting likely is not found broadly is that strategic planning has been adopted at the departmental level. These exercises encourage strategic thinking, but they also collectivize the process and thus make the ADM a party to defining the direction of the organization. Perhaps a more fundamental reason why heroic "visioning" may not be in evidence is that opportunities to set organizational direction do not present themselves to individual ADMs. Decision-making, generally, is a set of collective judgements at the division, department, and government levels.

Nonetheless, several ADMs interviewed relate that a minister or a deputy has given them mandates to achieve broad, and sometimes bold, objectives within a policy domain. They were left to their own resources to come up with the plan and the strategy by which it would be effected. Examples of one of these exceptions follow.

(b) Selling, Advocating, Championing to Others

Even though defining a vision and setting the strategic direction of a division is not embraced by all ADMs, they leave little doubt that they are involved in championing and advocating program proposals and ideas. This point is the essence of Proposition 2/Corollary 3(d), wherein ADMs are presumed to exercise leadership through "gaining and sustaining the interest and support of the subordinate executive management team for strategies which realize the vision and values of the organization." A portion of what suffices as selling programs has been addressed when discussing ADM communicating to the various points of the organizational compass. The point is capsulated in Proposition 5/Corollary 2(b), wherein ADMs are said to promote the organization's messages, products, and services to clients, higher management, and subordinates in a manner that

gains and sustains their support. Selling as an aspect of providing leadership entails employing suasion and, using a word which many ADMs found descriptive, "championing" strategic schemes, programs, policies, and initiatives. The corollary implies this.

This championing role is best crystallized through an example. Recently, Alberta Municipal Affairs' assistant deputy minister, Improvement Districts Administration Division, was shepherding a number of quasi-local-government entities called improvement districts, then under the administration of the province, to independent municipal authority status. The initiative was an understandably delicate one, as there was a fiscal reckoning for the citizens of these entities, who had long enjoyed having services provided by the province. As residents of improvement districts, they had had a lighter tax burden than citizens residing within many incorporated local governments. Although the Alberta government was steadfast in its commitment to the initiative and the elected leadership of improvement district advisory committees acknowledged there were important advantages to be gained from incorporation, the entire process of moving toward incorporation and self-government involved strict care to invention and timing, and an enormous amount of selling.

The ADM was at the centre of this process. The complexity and scope of the transformation meant that beyond broad ministerial and government pronouncements the incumbent had to feel his way, sometimes anticipating actions and sometimes discovering them. The ADM had to sell his strategies and initiatives as well as convince his deputy and the minister of the wisdom of his approach and make the point again where the initiative did not move ahead as planned. He had to communicate the philosophy of the broader initiative to his subordinates—many of whom would be displaced or redeployed as a result of the initiative—so that they could contribute to the transformation. Selling to staff not only involved providing the big picture but also

providing understandings that permitted changes to be made across the entire range of administrative activities and relationships.

Within his department and the government administration, the incumbent had to sell the transformation, a difficult task given the government's practices and policies. On a simple matter such as procurement, which improvement districts did through the Government of Alberta's purchasing system, the ADM's efforts to wean the improvement districts from the provincial system and provide them with experience had to occur in the teeth of established procedures.

Selling in this circumstance meant the ADM had to discover ways to meet legitimate, competing government goals. Since other departments also provide important services to these authorities, it was necessary to communicate the nature of the transformation to the appropriate officials within the departments. More than this, it was necessary to gain their support for change, including its pacing, so that budgetary, personnel, and policy activities could be coordinated.

Since legislation had to be changed, it was necessary to run the gauntlet of the legislative amendment process. Beyond this, the citizenry had to be sold on the government's policy and on the strategy and pace of transformation. Failure to accomplish these things would have doomed the exercise to failure, or significantly redefined it.

All the elements of Proposition 2/Corollary 3 (Incremental Leadership) are touched in this account. The ADM positioned and reoriented the organization. The activity was initiated to align the departmental division with government policy. Moreover, there is evidence that the ADM sustained momentum by maintaining a wide variety of contacts with others. In the case of dealing with staff, he spoke of regular meetings in which the very essence of the enterprise had to be repeated as personnel sometimes lost their way in the details. The ADM was required to return to his deputy

and the minister to renew his mandate when the project faltered and began to run behind schedule, or when superiors lost interest in it. This was the case even though the ADM had been assigned by these superiors to take the project forward.

The Municipal Affairs ADM's toil, and the selling involved, represent a few major initiatives in which the official is charged with fundamentally redefining government-constituent relationships. Such initiatives involve energetic and extensive efforts to sell a great number of people on the wisdom and benefits of new governmental policy. However, at the time that this research was being conducted such initiatives were not observed in great numbers.

Selling less heroic initiatives often involves touching many bases both within and outside of the system. ADMs interviewed testified that ideas seldom sell themselves: ideas must be packaged and have a champion. In some instances the sponsorship for an idea comes directly from the minister, and therefore selling it upward is less of an issue than advancing its particulars. Selling the initiative to the division, across departmental and governmental lines, and championing it to external actors is often where the bulk of energies is spent in such cases.

Yet, in most cases, ideas for policy and administrative innovations come either from inside the division or are advocated by external groups. Many times the task of advocacy is to sell the idea upwards, and in this ADMs are often free to pick and choose the innovations they think warrant their advocacy, given their strategic position in the departmental information flow. This picking and choosing apply to the application of judgement (Proposition 3/Corollary 1), and to Proposition 6/Corollary 6 (ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice). A typical example of how ADMs choose ideas they will support is captured in this statement:

What you wind up doing is sorting through all of the ideas that bubble away in the bureaucracy and taking the ones that seem to make sense and show some promises

that are consistent with government policy and championing those kinds of ideas in an attempt to get them [to be adopted].⁴⁸

Selling the idea therefore is made easier to the extent that the ADM is convinced of its legitimacy and is prepared to invest energy and time into communicating it.

Depending on the internal decision-making machinery of the department and the ADM's and deputy's styles, worthy ideas are advanced in a variety of ways. Normally ADMs work with subordinates to define an idea in sufficient detail to permit it to be relayed to the deputy minister in a coherent form. While the actual broaching of the idea may occur verbally, some written documentation is normally advanced. What is important is that the process of selling involves a measured initial communication in which there is an effort to acquire a mandate to develop a fuller proposal. In most instances it is the ADM who is the advocate, while the deputy and minister are consumers of the proposals. As established previously, ADMs are often consumers of proposals framed lower within the organization, but it is they who have the responsibility to move these notions upward. Moreover, it is the ADM upon whom the responsibility falls to sell proposals to the deputy and executive peers in departmental executive and management committees. These observations add credence to a variety of corollaries: Proposition 3/Corollary 1 (Judgement), since the selling inherently contains tactical and strategic considerations; (Proposition 6/Corollary 6), as part of the exercise of judgement involves the sponsorship of selected ideas; and Proposition 3/Corollary 2 (Executive Management as a Group Process), to the extent that it is reaffirmed that ADMs are consumers of ideas and proposals from below.

⁴⁸ Official 37, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 30 April 1991.

(c) Defining the Culture and Instilling Values

Only a few ADMs interviewed volunteered that their job involved defining the culture of their organization. This is not surprising given the incremental character of the departmental innovation process. Among those who said that developing organizational values and defining an organizational culture are key features of the job is one ADM who organized weekend seminars to communicate his vision of the balance between family and work which attracted hundreds of divisional employees and their families. He also maintains an active speaking schedule, extolling the concepts he developed for his division. Although few other ADMs pursue organizational culture building as their passion and principal *raison d'être*, other evidence of culture building exists.

The Municipal Affairs ADM who was responsible for overseeing the transition of improvement districts acknowledged that he was redefining the culture of his organization through a sweeping initiative. However, he noted that the change in culture was largely a byproduct of the structural changes being made. He stated that his role was largely one of putting a positive perspective on the new order, as well as alerting members of his organization to coming changes. Another ADM who recently assumed responsibility for a uniformed service with a strong professional culture described himself as very much involved in a concerted effort to change attitudes and outlooks. The task is compounded by the fact that his profession is not that which dominates the division, and further complicated by the international character of the core profession. Perhaps this is why the official is so cognizant of the need to address the cultural aspects of the organization. The interviewees were not requested to comment on building an organizational culture. Undoubtedly, many more of these ADMs were involved in defining new perspectives for their organizations.

It should be reiterated that even though many ADMs spoke of defining program direction as the most significant contribution of their job, few mentioned the importance

of defining an organizational culture. Perhaps ADMs do not consider defining organizational culture to be a salient feature of their work, notwithstanding its inclusion in job profiles. Alternatively, as has been suggested in the literature, it may be that while few officials shape the organizational culture, they all have a hand in dealing with it.

(d) Risk Taking

There is evidence that ADMs take more risks than their subordinates. Risk taking is inherent in deciding what proposals should be advanced upward and what information should be passed on to the deputy. It also is a factor in relationships with external groups, and in delivering tangible results once ideas have been successfully sold to others. What appears to heighten the risk of ADM work is the vagueness of policy prescription, i.e., having to guess at the minister's and government's intentions. This can happen even when policies are in place, as political and administrative circumstances can change rapidly. Moreover, risk is inherent in the job owing to the complexity of external relationships and the fact that certain external constituencies have direct ties to the political centre of government. Complexity entails risk because relationships are more likely to go off the rails either by mischance or by misjudgement. External actors' ties to the political centre promote prospects of problems being brought to the attention of superiors. Such reporting might be a positive occurrence; however, it is also possible that it places ADMs somewhat at the mercy of the well-connected. Herein lies the pernicious aspect of the risk.

The interviews show that the more cosmic and novel policy initiatives, and the more forceful the ADM is in leading, the greater the risk to the ADM's career through mischance or miscalculation. However, the qualification is that risk taking in government administration is profoundly attenuated by collective decision-making processes and hierarchical regimes of approvals which often extend upward beyond the minister. This

has implications for Proposition 3/Corollary 2 (Executive Management as a Group Process), which declares that executive management requires ADMs to work closely with others.

While there is room for creativity, innovation, and initiative, all of these take place within the collective decision-making machinery in government, and the limitations imposed by extragovernmental actors. Surprisingly, creativity and initiative are often most in evidence when ADMs press forward an idea by assailing the collectivity of decision-making.

Entrepreneurial risk taking, as it is articulated in private-sector-oriented management literature, is little in evidence. The Tories' inherit suspicion of the bureaucracy and a strong progressivist legacy undoubtedly are other factors which suppress risk-taking. Many decisions that involve risk at the ADM level are ones for which the recriminations of mischance fall most directly on the official—e.g., decisions about whether or not to inform the deputy minister or minister about some issue. Perhaps it is for this reason that at the executive level there is so much collective decision making and consultation, and a deference to "consensus."⁴⁹

In view of the foregoing analysis it is possible to draw several conclusions about the nature of visionary leadership at the ADM level. First, there is evidence that some ADMs create an organizational vision and strive to realize it through proselytizing others inside and outside their department. However, formulating grand visions is not a common occurrence. More common is ADMs operating within the bounds of departmental tradition and "culture," ministerial and deputy minister preferences, and the collective

⁴⁹ James D. Thompson strives to explain such behaviour through a set of formally constituted propositions. Although never directly mentioning the word "risk," he does offer the following: "Proposition 9.8a: When the power of an individual in a highly discretionary job is less than his dependence, he will seek a coalition." The implication is that coalition building is an important feature of risk reduction. See James D. Thompson, *Organizations in Action: Social Science Bases of Administrative Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 126.

management preferences of peers. Therefore, the preponderance of ADM leadership activity is not "visionary" and there is neither the expectation nor the scope to create an organizational vision. However, there appears to be a call for the type of leadership described in Proposition 2/Corollary 3 (Incremental Leadership). These limitations on the ADM appear to apply to the deputy as well.

Second, although an expansive visionary mandate to seek an organizational definition may not be common, ADMs enjoy considerable opportunities to champion ideas that are more modest in scope. This fits with the collective character of government decision making and with the character of the often uncertain and tumultuous environment of contemporary government. In championing new approaches and innovative ideas, many of which are generated within the division, ADMs exercise what is likely their most important leadership function. They judge which matters should be championed, and in this way play a role in the organization's direction and purpose. Again, the essential notion of Proposition 3/Corollary 1 (Judgement) is underscored.

Third, the personal role of the ADM in innovating new initiatives should not be discounted. Although most ADMs acknowledge that they work closely with subordinates in defining new initiatives, most assert that they provide the inspiration for project ideas and contribute to the refinement of proposals originating within the organization. Several ADMs spoke of pressure from their deputy minister and minister to innovate;⁵⁰ others spoke of the broad latitude which they were afforded in order to innovate. Thus, a great many ADMs exercise leadership by being the innovative spark within their divisions. In other words, ADMs provide intellectual leadership in often single-handedly championing proposals upward. This might be viewed as a confirmation of visionary leadership, although its scope is less sweeping than what is presumed to be implied in constructs of

⁵⁰ Officials in the Public Works, Supply and Services department state that their minister rates the deputy on the amount of innovation emerging from the ADM level.

“visionary” leadership. In any event, the importance of initiative, which is a key leadership attribute, is identified in Proposition 3 (Leadership). Moreover, while nothing can be said about how ADMs compare with other executives, this premium on innovation supports the notion contained within Proposition 1/Corollary 2 (The Hierarchical Effect) that suggests abstraction and intellectuality are features of higher management jobs.

Finally, the circumstantial nature of ADM leadership must be acknowledged. Osbaldeston writes of the changing management needs of a department which require the deputy minister to adopt different administrative leadership foci.⁵¹ This point is recognized by popular management theorists.⁵² Of note in these perspectives is that the leadership role of officials is likely to change depending on circumstances. Thus, variations in ADM leadership activities may not only reflect different leadership styles of ADMs’ superiors but also the particular phase in an organization’s life-cycle or the particular exigencies which affect the organization.

The ADM’s membership on the departmental executive committee deserves mention in discussing leadership, as it is within the committee that the official shares in the collective leadership of the department. It should be noted that a few departments have nothing even resembling an executive committee, but they are the exception.

Department executive committees normally comprise the deputy minister, the ADMs, and selected non-executive-level staff who report to the deputy. Many departments have a committee which functions as an executive committee even though it may be named otherwise. As these bodies are the creation of the deputy, their function reflects the deputy’s style of operating. In some departments the executive committee

⁵¹ Gordon Osbaldeston, *Keeping Deputy Ministers Accountable* (Scarborough, Ont.: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1989), 129–30.

⁵² A classic exposition of this point is found in Robert H. Guest, Paul Hersey, and Kenneth H. Blanchard, *Organizational Change through Effective Leadership* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977).

tends to operate only as a forum for the deputy to communicate information to senior officials, while in others it makes binding votes on financial matters and policy proposals. Between these extremes is a range of practices.

What is important to note is that ADMs share leadership responsibility in the executive committees from which some form of collective decision making and direction emanate. This leadership may be exercised on an issue by issue basis, or it may involve deliberation and the setting of departmental direction through a strategic planning exercise. Thus, although the norm of ADM leadership may appear timid when considered within the divisional context, in some departments ADMs are a part of a strong collective leadership operating in the context of the departmental executive committee. The foregoing supports Proposition 3/Corollary 2 (Executive Management as a Group Process).

(3) Managing the External Context

Evidence in this chapter makes it clear that a facet of ADM interaction involves managing the context. It is noted how ADMs assert themselves into relationships normally managed by subordinates to solve problems before they get out of hand. Interview extracts reveal how they “fend off” and otherwise deal with external representatives and advocates who seek resolution of their problems at the political level. In many instances it is likely that fending off also involves protecting program and departmental interests. Nevertheless, fending off and otherwise dealing with external actors is a feature of an ADM’s role. The fact that they must sell new initiatives to extragovernmental actors is another feature of managing the external context.

The foregoing description of the Municipal Affairs ADM’s practices related to improvement districts serves as an example of this aspect of an ADM operation; the person often must proselytize the government’s objectives while seeking to represent the

interests of those affected with the hope that controversial points will be resolved to the general satisfaction of all parties. An ADM in an economic development ministry, in discussing people at his level, states:

[The ADM] level is absolutely critical in terms of selling what the department does.... They're the ones who have to be out there meeting with the Chambers of Commerce and various business associations and community groups explaining what the department does. [They must be] doing all the public relations kinds of things to ensure that everybody understands why we are here, what we can help them with, and really to build up a good image in terms of what we're all about. I think that role is not well understood in many departments, but it is absolutely critical.⁵³

Clearly this relates to managing the external context.

While ministers and deputies are involved in putting the government's policy face forward, there is evidence that in matters where there is some measure of political risk, the job of testing the waters is assigned to ADMs. Summing up the comments of many, one ADM makes the following observation:

I see more and more the political stuff is moving further down the [hierarchical] chain...[it involves] transferring the risk. I mean if [a policy matter] is going to be fairly controversial and you [as a politician] are not sure how far you are going to go with it, [you may reason] why do it yourself, send out a senior executive and if they come back in a body bag, well, then you know that was not such a great idea. And you do this with another idea until they come back at least partly in one piece. [This] is manageable [at the ADM level] if you know that this is what the role is and you are warned in advance. But if it is dropped on you, which is often the case, or you are given mixed signals and you don't know what the political agenda is...[you] are bound to get in trouble no matter what you do.⁵⁴

This statement indicates that ADMs are deeply involved in matters of managing the context, often at their own sacrifice. It also reveals more than any evidence offered to this point that the ADM role can have a healthy political element to it. In this regard Proposition 6/Corollary 2 (Political Content) is placed in question. The corollary assumes that the content of ADM advice to the deputy minister and minister is preponderantly

⁵³ Official 109, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 21 May 1991

⁵⁴ Official 312, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 14 May 1991.

administrative in character. In fact, when performing as the point person for government initiatives it would be surprising indeed if the ADM's communications to deputy and minister were predominantly administrative. It is far more likely that the essence of their reports deals with the temper of the public and organized interests. Moreover, to the extent that they are involved in forcing an initiative or policy, and become identified with these, it is likely that ADMs are deeply involved in the authoritative allocation of values.

Descriptions of the ADM external management role suggest that they function principally as brokers of interests between the department, government, and external actors. There is evidence that confirms the full range of Aberbach and his colleagues' policy-making focuses. Alberta ADMs approach the environmental context in the roles of technical policy problem solver, broker, and legalist-trustee, which lends support to the aspect of Proposition 6/Corollary 4 (Principal Policy Role Foci) that declares the full range of the Comparative Elite Project images I-IV are to be found. Few ADMs describe their liaison with extragovernmental actors solely in terms of being the solver of technical problems. Commonly there is a portrayal evoking a brokering and trustee orientation. Orientations which Aberbach and his colleagues cite as being less common among bureaucrats of Western democracies are also in evidence, although notably less frequently than those of the broker and trustee. Political administrators are present within the Alberta government at the assistant deputy minister level. This point is evident in an analysis of career mobility within the Alberta public service (an analysis alluded to in chapter 2 which was conducted for this study but laid aside for want of space), and in chapter 2 descriptions of techniques used by the Lougheed government to assert control over the public service.

In conclusion, there is little doubt that ADMs are deeply involved in managing the external context. Some officials interviewed suggest that managing the external context is a core feature of the ADM job, a point given some support by Osbaldeston. Others play

down the point, although “Miles’s Law”—where you sit determines where you stand—appears to have some bearing on these responses. Statistical evidence provided in following chapter reveals that officials in different job functions and department types are statistically distinguished by the frequency with which they relate to representatives of interest groups.

4.4. Reflections

ADMs lead their divisions. They are situated in the nexus of the divisional communication flow, a position in which they are able to control information that passes to higher levels. By the same token, they are key agents promoting ideas coming from the apex of the organization. ADMs counsel and provide information to their ministers and to other political figures, although they are not charged with these responsibilities in the same way as the deputy minister. They shoulder collective responsibility for the management of the department and certain management responsibilities for the general administration of government. Managing the external context is an important feature of their job that they share with other senior administrators. They are nevertheless distinguished from their subordinates in certain aspects of these duties.

Even though they do not provide visionary leadership, ADMs routinely exercise leadership in a way consistent with the chapter 3 description of incremental leadership (see Proposition 2/Corollary 3). Goal definition and initiative innovation are clearly features of the ADM job. While by no means the only ones involved in defining organizational direction and new initiatives, ADMs clearly have a say in such matters and are, by their own admission, often the architects of new directions and initiatives. At the same time there are limitations to this explanation, since few ADMs admit to promoting wholly new organizational directions. Bold, energetic initiatives fueled by an official’s personal vision tend to be dampened by a plethora of organizational factors.

The point is made throughout the chapter that even with modest initiatives ADMs do a great deal of selling and advocating. The word "champion" can accurately be used as both a verb and a noun when describing this feature of the official's leadership role. An ADM must invest considerable energy to have new things done in the system, all of which involves thinking through notions, proselytizing them, and generally paying attention to bringing important actors on side. Without the investment of energy, the tide of routine events dominates and defines the parameters of action. ADMs play a critical role in breaking a routine of norm-maintaining behaviour. There is evidence of their being successful in this endeavor, although their policy changes tend not to be of a heroic character.

The modesty of the preponderance of ADM initiatives indicates that redefining organizational culture and values is not a part of most ADMs' conscious practice of departmental management. Nevertheless, the actions of these officials change organizational values and culture, since what they say and do influences their subordinates' morale and direction. A small minority of ADMs acknowledge that defining organizational values, as well as changing attitudes, values, and outlooks in order to practice public management, is a key feature of their job.

Risk taking is an important part of an ADM's job of exercising leadership. Although some ADMs assume risk only when it is foisted on them, others are risk takers. However, ADM risk taking should not be equated with the gun-slinging, risk-taking behaviour celebrated in private sector management literature, for there are forces that conspire against excessive public sector risk taking. Collective decision making at the executive level, a constructive, though often redundant, review which occurs at each level of the chain of command, and the government's expectation that politicians be given opportunities to comment, vet, and oversee administrative action all weigh against risk

taking at the ADM level. In fact, risks are often taken because it is impossible to bring matters to the timely attention of the ADM's superiors.

The ADM's role in the policy advisory process is the least well developed in formal job descriptions and profiles of executive managerial work. This study finds that ADMs actively counsel their ministers, which minimally involves providing ministers with information in response to inquiries from a broad range of sources. It also involves formulating briefing notes and papers which the minister may refer to on occasions when called upon to speak, represent a departmental view, or weigh information in the process of making a decision. Thus, ADMs are involved in preparing major policy documents and new legislation, and in making representations to committees of politicians. The infrequency of these activities may explain the relative unimportance that ADMs attribute to them. That such matters are principally the domain of the deputy minister also influences the importance that ADMs ascribe to these aspects of policy advising.

Although ADMs are situated in a unique position to fashion policy proposals, this does not mean that they fail to involve others in the process. Indeed, the process of fashioning policy appears to be a group process. It includes subordinates who are often the principal draftspersons of policy proposals, the deputy and departmental peers sitting on executive and other departmental committees, and peers and other officials outside the department. This group of others includes numerous extragovernmental people. But what is unique about the ADM position at the centre of this group of people is that it provides a link with the executive of the department and, in some cases, a link with the minister and higher political councils from outside the organization. So positioned, ADMs have considerable power to shape policy and opportunity to invest proposals with their own views on policy direction. Needless to say, many ADMs take advantage of such opportunities.

Yet, to state that Alberta government ADMs and other higher officials enjoy advantages in pressing their views of proper policy on elected officials misrepresents the true situation. Advantages enjoyed by ADMs are balanced by a number of factors which have been mentioned earlier. The long tenure of the government and its ministers is a strong counter-balance to administrative power. Populating the ranks with “blue and expert” officials is another counterbalancing factor. Moreover, the administrators’ own sense of their place in the democratic process is an important factor. An indication of the power of ADMs is found in the arduous nature of selling proposals for new initiatives. If ADMs were influential it would be easy, but they are not.

The collective management role of ADMs is not constituted in the same manner as that of Alberta deputies. On the one hand, ADMs are not subject to the same multiple pull of accountabilities, but on the other hand, they have collective management responsibilities and in some cases share them with multiple accountabilities. In cases where ADMs are assigned senior financial officer status, multiple accountabilities are formalized. Administrative and operational support ADMs are responsible for working with central agencies to promote government administrative standards and shoulder multiple responsibilities that often tug at their loyalties from different directions. It is clear from the interviews that most ADMs also view their role as being dedicated to promoting sound administration, serving the minister of the day, and promoting good government. The Westminster-Whitehall tradition of ministerial responsibility and political neutrality, and progressivist prescriptions of technical professionalism are integral elements of what many ADMs see as their role. These features can be found at the centre of the ADM role perceptions and as a result contribute to binding ADMs to a collective management role.

There is little doubt that Alberta ADMs are deeply involved in managing external relations, more of which will be explored in the next chapter. For the moment

let it be said that ADMs are involved in managing external relations on behalf of the minister, the department, the deputy minister, and their own organizations. ADMs are not uniquely distinguished by their dealings with extragovernmental actors, since they share this interaction with other executives, but they are distinguished from their subordinates by the opportunities that their position affords them to manage relationships. The ADM is at the centre of numerous interaction networks that are central to specific policy matters. While this can also be said about third tier officialdom, ADMs differ because they always have liaisons with pertinent subordinates. From their positions at the centre of these networks, ADMs are in unique positions to control information. They have greater opportunities to possess information than other actors in the network, and command more resources than others for changing policies and relations. ADMs' ability to time intervention is greater than that of their subordinates, as well as having more symbolic force. In short, ADMs have a role in managing external relations which is critical and powerful.

Much has been written about differences between deputies and ADMs. Although there is a commonalty in certain general management functions, there are noticeable differences in the importance ascribed to the performance of collective management responsibilities, political level liaison, departmental leadership, and extragovernmental liaison. Deputies rate these functions as being more important to their jobs than do ADMs. Nevertheless, ADMs share a great deal with deputies in these matters, as they too are responsible for setting strategic directions and deploying prime organizational resources to position the organization to meet strategic objectives and challenges. Thus, while ADMs may not be "petit" deputy ministers, the "deputy" and the "minister" titles are quite apt.

CHAPTER 5

PARTICULARS OF ADM-OTHER ACTOR RELATIONS

5.0. Introduction

This chapter takes a closer look at relationships between assistant deputy ministers (ADMs) and key system actors. The bulk of evidence on these interactions is drawn from ADM and deputy minister interviews conducted for this study. Survey data are nominally used to test three propositions that apply to each of the ADMs' relationships with other actors: Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect), Proposition 1/Corollary 6 (The Effect of Departmental Function), and Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions). Related propositions also are tested.

The chapter's three sections roughly correspond to the three ADM liaison networks identified through preliminary factor analysis.¹ ADM interactions with the most salient actors are plumbed in each section. Thus in Section 5.1 ADM interactions with principal actors in a Policy Integration Network are considered. These include the deputy minister, minister, minister's office, and departmental peers. During the interviews detailed information was garnered on the particulars of these interactions, including the mediums and forums of interaction, initiation and symmetry of communications, formality, and the level and character of conflict and friction. The specifics of communications among the actors are not reported, since they are as varied as the business of government.

¹ It is important to note that the relationships can be considered in a dyadic fashion without reference to the networks. Defining sections according to these network titles is principally effected to provide some logic to the investigation of the various ADM-other actor relationships.

Section 5.2 focuses on principal actors of a Legislative Affairs Network. Among them are government caucus committees, government MLAs, opposition MLAs, and Legislative Assembly committees. Selected particulars similar to those reported for key policy network actors are described for ADM-caucus committee and ADM-MLA relationships.

Section 5.3 deals with the salient actors of an Extragovernmental Liaison Network, which includes association and interest group representatives, business CEOs and managers, and private citizens. Details on the mediums and forums of interaction, initiative and symmetry, formality, and other particulars of interactions are reported for ADM-interest group relationships. The section also includes a brief theoretical discussion of bureaucrat-interest group relations as they are presumed to occur within defined types of policy networks. Evidence of the policy networks and corresponding bureaucratic behaviour is sought with the view that findings shed light on the general character of ADM-interest group interactions.

5.1. ADM Interactions with Principal Actors of the Policy Integration Network

The Deputy Minister

Next to their subordinates, the actors with whom ADMs have the most frequent contact are their deputy ministers. With the exception of the minister's office and the minister, ADMs rate deputy minister contacts as the most important to the successful performance of their jobs.² This finding is somewhat surprising, as deputy ministers are assumed to be the actors who are *most* important for successful ADM job performance. After all, it is the deputy minister who normally has the greatest say in the selection of ADMs, who is accountable for their performance, and who conducts their performance

² See Appendix F.

appraisals, as well as being the architect of the structure that establishes the ADM post. Moreover, as established in chapter 4, deputy ministers often have considerable say in the vision and corporate direction of the department, with their ADMs' vision being a mere reflection.

Assistant deputy ministers interviewed repeatedly used the word "style," as in "the deputy's style," in describing their working relationship with their deputies. The frequency of the reference itself suggests that Proposition 1/Corollary 4 (Supervisory Style) has substance. However, the definition of "style" is imprecise in ADM parlance. It appears to refer to the deputy's way of controlling communications, engaging ADMs and others in decisions, focusing attention on policy and administrative matters, and effecting change. Unpleasant experiences with a deputy are often described as clashes of styles, which covers everything from personal to philosophical differences. In other cases, "style" also may be used as a code word to denote incompetence or shortcomings in a deputy's administrative or political acumen.

ADM judgement of deputy minister competence is not tied to any particular style. Deputy ministers who restrict ADM access to the minister and other executive level politicians, who tend to be uncommunicative, who ignore department administrative particulars, and who heighten ADM frustrations and anxieties are often praised as competent officeholders. Despite suggestions to the contrary within the management literature, deputies exhibiting opposite qualities considered to be desirable are not universally praised. Indeed, the litmus tests of DM competence among many ADMs appears to be the deputy's ability to sustain and protect the core operations and values of the department. Questions of competence are raised when the deputy fails to sustain and protect the organization and its core values.

Deputies' communications with their ADMs range from frequent and informal to relatively infrequent and formal.³ Traditions framing the character of relationships at the executive level have developed in some departments, and have been sustained by devices such as departmental executive committees. However, in the main, it is a deputy minister's personal disposition and not departmental tradition that determines the character of top level interactions. Since these matters often depend on the deputy's preferences, they can change dramatically when there is a change at the top. This is also the case when it comes to ADM-ministerial interactions, on which deputy ministerial preferences have some bearing.

ADM: The level of bonding [with the minister] that used to occur doesn't occur anymore...those who have been in the organization a while comment on this. One director who has been around for quite some time never met the last two ministers in their office—maybe [he met them] at Christmas parties and shook hands—whereas some of us, even in middle management, used to be there twice a week....

ECL: Is this change dependent on the deputy minister's view of how the relations should go, or some intersection between a minister's style and a deputy's style?

ADM: It's the deputy's style entirely, because we saw the change with the same minister....⁴

Proposition 1/Corollary 4 (Supervisory Style) is supported in the foregoing commentary, as it is clear that the manner with which the deputy approaches the job does have a bearing on ADM work and relationships.

Almost all departments have in one form or another an executive committee with ADMs as members. The foci of these committees vary. Some operate as the main policy defining body of the department, with nearly all policy proposals generated within the department reviewed by the executive committee. Other executive committees focus on administrative matters and leave policy issues to be discussed in other forums. Still other

³ Deputy ministers' per annum contacts with their ADMs range from a low of 104 to a high of 2,600.

⁴ Official 137, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 29 April 1991.

executive committees meet only as a forum for the exchange of information. What is significant is that variations in the executive committee operation appear to be largely associated with the value the deputy places on it. New deputy ministers often change executive committee organization, functions, and membership. The following account by an ADM is typical of the influence held by deputy ministers:

The executive committee has varied dramatically [over the years I have been here] depending on the preference of the deputy and the minister. For example, [Minister X] literally chaired...the policy executive committee which was [composed of] the ADMs, the deputy, and the minister. Then under [Minster Y], who was not nearly as hands-on, that arrangement disappeared and the deputy of the day created DEC (the Departmental Executive Committee), which was the same group except the minister was not there.... That committee actually met quite regularly and was quite useful for a while but, again, the deputy of that day favoured a one-man, one-vote, approach to how the committee operated.... Under the current deputy this [does not] happen. There is an overall strategy, his, and there is no question of voting—it is a question of how we are going to do it.⁵

From these accounts two conclusions can be drawn which are pertinent to Proposition 1/Corollary 4 (Supervisory Style). First, deputy ministers differ in their approaches to managing and relating to their ADMs, which affects ADM task orientations. Minimally, it has a bearing on the nature of interactions between peers and with the minister. Deputy ministerial style has a bearing on the extent to which ADMs participate in collective departmental decision-making activities, as this is determined by the deputy minister. Second, this does not appear to profoundly affect ADM assessments of deputy competence and worthiness. Although style may accentuate these assessments, the deputy's competence has a greater bearing on ADM assessments and the vitality of their working relationships. The point supports the corollary. To the extent that style and competence can be separated, it is clear that the first has less bearing on ADM work than the second.

⁵ Official 312, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 14 May 1991.

Executive committee forums are important in providing for ADM-deputy exchanges. Although other opportunities for exchanges exist, these venues are nonetheless of unique significance, as they are institutionalized, have a rolling agenda, and bring together the principal executive actors of the department. More often than not, executive committees are the premier departmental forum in which the executive level politics of the organization are played out. Here, under certain conditions, deputies can be confronted and can be mollified. For their part, deputies can use the executive committee as a stage for practical and symbolic instruction. To the extent that boardroom politics are important, it is essential that this "dynamic" not be missed when considering ADMs' relationships with their bosses.

For all intents and purposes, ADMs are stationed in the Edmonton metropolitan area. Most have their offices in departmental headquarters which are located in major government buildings surrounding the Legislative Assembly grounds, or in nearby high-rise office towers. ADMs are usually situated in the same building as their deputy, and in several departments ADMs and deputies have offices on the same floor. Such arrangements are by design, as they provide opportunities for ADMs to have face-to-face audiences with their peers and their deputy.

Few deputy ministers have a great deal of free time, which conditions ADM-deputy interaction. The point is highlighted in this official's comment:

It is hard to walk into the deputy's office because he literally meets all day. He has very little time for himself. But he said to me in my first week here, "Look, if it is important get on the phone, because I will know if you are calling, it will be important." So it had better not be frivolous....⁶

Yet, to the extent that deputies are solidly scheduled, the determining factor in interacting with ADMs is the value they place on making themselves available. Some ADMs are in constant contact with their boss, as is the case in the following account:

⁶ Official 209, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 6 May 1991.

There's a lot of contact and I see him a lot during the day...you know, one, two, three times during the day. I see him on road trips a lot. I call him in the evening. He calls me. I'll go over [to his house] on weekends. I'll see him at the office on weekends. A lot of it depends on the intensity of the policy issue we're dealing with. But, sure, there's a tremendous amount of contact and we are always trying to communicate what our concerns are, how things are going, what should we do in a particular area, what is a policy initiative that I think we should go for, and why is he doing it.⁷

Whether their deputy ministers encourage open and active communications or not, most ADMs develop rules of thumb concerning the information and matters they should bring to the deputy's attention. More generally, they develop stratagems for communicating information and ideas. All of these approaches are pragmatic, based on the relationships existing between the officials, and the particulars of the items. This senior ADM relates his strategy for approaching his deputy:

When I have developed a firm conviction about an issue, I go to the deputy and say, we have a bit of a problem here and this is the way to solve it or we will have a problem if we do not do this.... I don't take too long doing it. It might be ten minutes, fifteen minutes, that sort of thing. It is most effectively done privately, I might add, because he likes to operate that way, as my previous deputy did. So I have a ten minute chat, it is not terribly formal, no one is taking minutes or notes or anything like that. But I have to have my conviction when I make that proposal to him, because I do not think he has the time to spare to do it any other way. And then he will invariably give me feedback right away. For example, he might say, "Well, I don't think that is one of the minister's priorities at the moment," and I will say, "Well, I know it isn't, but it will take a couple or three months to work this thing through, and it certainly is going to be a problem, so I would like to work on it." Then he'll say, "OK, fine." I haven't dumped anything on him that he has to make a horrible decision right now. He will absorb the germ of the idea.⁸

Moreover, depending on the circumstances, ADMs often concoct schemes that provide the access they require. One ADM refers to this activity as his "quality time" strategy. Although the example may not be typical, it illustrates the point:

ECL: Do you initiate most of the meetings with the deputy?

ADM: Nearly all of them.... [The deputy] will phone every so often, but usually I have to force communications. For example, I will come at seven o'clock in the

⁷ Official 128, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 6 May 1991.

⁸ Official 157, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 6 April 1991.

morning sometimes and walk in his office and say, "Hey, I need to know something."

ECL: Does he sleep there?

ADM: It seems like it...so I take advantage of it. If I need to know something or have an emergency, I will be here early and just walk up into his office before his palace guard gets there.

ECL: So you really have to manage the access and it is on your shoulders.

ADM: Damn right, it is my problem!⁹

The interviews revealed that there are also deputy ministers who drop into ADM offices, call them regularly to obtain feedback on ideas, and make genuine efforts to structure opportunities to meet informally. Some ADMs related that their deputy actively brought them into policy and decision making as peers. However, there is often a contingent nature to these interactions that is tied to administrative and political requirements as well as to the deputy's interest. Since the effect of these factors appears to be random, the extent to which there is a continuing pattern of close deputy-ADM liaison appears to be determined in large measure by the deputy's management style.

While acknowledging the importance of deputy ministerial preferences in styling ADM-deputy interactions, selected factors influence these interactions. Among them are those predicted in Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions), Proposition 1/Corollary 6 (The Effect of Departmental Function), and Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect). Analysis of the frequencies with which ADM job function cohorts interact with their deputy ministers reveals no statistically significant differences ($F\text{-test} = .144, p = .8657$). Therefore, the Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions) supposition is not confirmed by the multiple regression model. The same conclusion is derived for Proposition 1/Corollary 6 (The Effect of Departmental Function), as no noteworthy difference

⁹ Official 332, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 10 April 1991.

between ADMs compared by the standard departmental cohort is revealed (F-test = .545, $p = .7032$).

A direct test of Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect) using multiple regression reveals that there is no significant difference among ADM departmental size cohorts when compared on the total number per annum of other actor interactions (F-test = .62, $p = .6007$). By this measure Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect), and Kotter's dictum from which the corollary is drawn, are not validated.¹⁰ Indeed, this evidence strengthens the supposition that, if anything, the larger an organization, the more likely interactions between specific actors will be diminished. This notion would seem to apply to ADM relations with the deputy, inasmuch as deputy ministers having greater spans of control would have less time to devote to interactions with individual subordinates. Table 5-1 tests this assumption, and provides evidence that speaks to the size effect of Proposition 1/Corollary 3.

Table 5-1.—ADM Departmental Size Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Interaction with Deputy Ministers

<i>Departmental Size Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Small-sized department (14)	553.14	-	-	-	-
Medium-sized department (22)	361.64	110.52	-.24	1.73	.0863
Large-sized department (30)	355.73	104.64	-.27	1.89	.0621
Extra-large-sized department (37)	279.81	101.44	-.4	2.69	.0083
$R^2 = .068$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .04$ $F\text{-test} = 2.423$ $p = .0704$ $N = 103$					

¹⁰ A test of the validity of Proposition 1/Corollary 3 using staff complement cohorts determined by the number of officials reporting to ADMs also produced no statistically significant results (F-test = .01, $p = .9978$). This test of the proposition is arguably a better one than that of departmental size, as it addresses the size of the organization which the general manager ADM controls.

Table 5-1 shows that the frequency with which ADMs interact with their deputies is weakly associated with departmental size (F-test = 2.42, $p = .0704$). Nonetheless, of note is the higher frequency in the smallest departments, which, while only weakly significant in comparison with medium and large departments, is demonstrably so when small and extra-large departments are compared. It can be deduced from the t-test statistics that in the smallest departments there is a level of "interaction" between deputies and ADMs that is generally absent in larger departments. Again, presumably the "intimacy" of relations in these small organizations facilitates greater interactions.

The effect on the quality of policy and management that these different levels of ADM-deputy interaction produce is not clear. ADMs' comments suggest that the effect is minimal. Still, it is likely that any response must be conditional, as ADMs' interactions with their bosses are contingent on a variety of factors. Moreover, the frequency of interactions may not be as important as the timing and context of contacts.¹¹ A point raised in chapter 4 is that the ADM knowledge of the minister's and government's requirements flows largely through the deputy. Thus, the closer the deputy-ADM relationship, the more informed the ADM.

One valuable indicator of the role distinction between levels of officialdom, and of the nature of relationships between officials, is the amount of conflict between actors.¹² Few ADMs indicated during the interviews that they had conflicts with their deputies, which is not surprising given that the respondents' comments were being taped

¹¹ In their recent *Canadian Public Administration* article, Scott Bennett and Margaret McPhail raise the prospect that it is not only frequency of contact that matters, but also the timing or positioning of incidents within the policy cycle. ADMs' satisfaction with the amount of time they spend with their deputies may vary significantly as a function of the policy phase focus of these contacts. See Scott Bennett and Margaret McPhail, "Policy Process Perceptions of Senior Canadian Federal Civil Servants: A View of the State and its Environment," *Canadian Public Administration* 35, no. 3 (Autumn 1992): 299-316.

¹² The idea of inquiring into conflicts comes from Ezra N. Suleiman, who found this a highly useful way of gaining insights into role and role perception. See Ezra N. Suleiman, *Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy in France: The Administrative Elite* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), 222.

by a researcher many had just met for the first time.¹³ Moreover, it is clear from the interviews and the analysis of the movement of departmental officials that new deputy ministers often retain only those ADMs with whom they can sustain a productive working relationship. Tenure, if it truly exists at all, tends to be a fragile shield against deputies determined to replace or remove their ADMs. Thus, conflict between ADMs and their deputies tends to be short-lived. Another factor that minimizes conflict between deputy ministers and their ADMs is that the general roles and pecking order appear to be well established by the government.

In summary, although institutional roles have a bearing on the nature of interactions between ADMs and deputy ministers, there is considerable variation in the particulars of these relationships. Much of the variation appears to be determined by the "style" of the deputy minister, an intangible quality. Some deputy ministers actively engage their ADMs, working closely with them through the executive committee and other venues or in one-to-one relationships. Other deputy ministers are not in continuous contact with their ADMs, preferring to let their subordinates manage the organization and to meet with them when necessary. Proposition 1/Corollary 4 (Supervisory Style) is supported by this observation, although the significance of the bearing on ADM task orientations is unclear. The only systematic pattern of interactions discovered relates to the greater frequency with which ADMs in smaller departments interact with their deputy minister. This indirectly confirms Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect).

The interviews show that executive level relations occur on a very human scale. Although many of the officials interviewed commanded organizations with hundreds of

¹³ There is a paradox in the observation that is not easily explained. While guarded about the conflict between themselves and their deputies, a number of ADMs felt free to express views about the competence and quality of their deputies. It is difficult to understand why interviewees might be open on more damning matters and guarded on lesser ones. Perhaps the paradox offers a glimpse into the culture of transactional relationships within the Alberta Public Service. Officials might loathe one another, but conflict, even the mention of it, is something that is avoided.

employees, interactions at the top occur between individuals who invest the time to know one another well. While the venues in which they interact may differ, and the frequencies with which ADMs meet their deputies may range from constant contact to meetings once every couple of weeks, personal understandings and assessments underpin the interactions. This is certainly true of deputy ministers' regard for their ADMs. This supports Proposition 3/Corollary 2, wherein executive management is described as a group process.

Personal trust and confidence in the abilities of subordinates are major factors in the structuring of relationships. Assessments of character and competence clearly influence interactions. The point is made by a senior ADM who served as a deputy minister in another government:

Typically, when a senior manager comes into a situation, he'll look at the players that he's working with fairly closely. Then he'll get a sense of confidence and trust. That may take him six to twelve months. And then, depending on that relationship, and his assessment of that trust and a sense of confidence in your abilities, it'll be hands-off again. So [in addition to the style of the deputy minister] it may be the characteristics and the style of the subordinate that influence the relationship as much as anything.¹⁴

The same point is amplified in this exchange with a veteran ADM who comments on the arms-length management style that his deputy minister exercises:

ECL: Do you think [that the room your deputy minister gives you and your colleagues] has a great deal to do with his personality and style?

ADM: Undoubtedly, but it also turns on the amount of trust that the DM has for the ADM. Deputies treat individual ADMs differently.

ECL: Depending on what, the function of the ADM job, or is it a more personal thing?

ADM: Well, it really depends on the degree of trust. I suppose you might call it the golden-haired boy syndrome...if you perform, then the performance is recognized in allowing you to do your thing without a lot of interference.

¹⁴ Official 211, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 28 May 1991.

ECL: Might not it have something to do with the stature of the job the ADM is holding?

ADM: Well, it may actually be the other way around. I found the deputy's trust and confidence says that this ADM [is the one] who's got more stature than this one.¹⁵

These exchanges address the aspect of Proposition 2/Corollary 4 (Trust and Confidence) that proposes ADMs engender personal trust among those with whom they must work closely. Still, it is not entirely clear from the interviews how trust, effective working relationships, the presence or absence of conflict, and deputy minister style work upon one another in the small world of senior departmental management. It is likely they do affect one another, although in complex fashion.

ADM Interactions with the Minister

ADMs rank their interactions with the minister as the second most important of all those measured ($\mu = 4.14$ out of 5.0). The most important interaction is with the minister's office ($\mu = 4.31$), which strengthens the significance of ministerial contacts among ADMs. The high importance rating for the minister is underscored by the fact that the frequency of ADMs' relations with ministers is less than the frequency of their interactions with a host of other government officials. It has been established that while ADMs are active in providing the minister, the minister's office, and the deputy with briefing notes and replies to the minister's questions, there is notably less ADM-ministerial contact when policy proposals and documents are the focus. This difference presumably has to do with the general burden of business. Also established is the central role of deputy ministers in permitting ADMs access to the minister and gatekeeping the minister's ability to contact ADMs and other subordinate officials directly.

¹⁵ Official 331, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 1 May 1991.

Table 5-2.—ADM Department Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Interaction with the Minister

<i>Department Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Conservation, development, and promotion of physical resources (27)	73.26	-	-	-	-
Public security and external affairs (18)	57.00	20.38	-.09	.80	.4269
Protection and development of human resources (37)	35.51	16.95	-.26	2.23	.0283
Public works, communication, and transportation (12)	20.67	23.24	-.25	2.26	.0258
Coordination of government (9)	13.67	25.78	-.25	2.31	.0229
$R^2 = .09$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .053$ $F\text{-test} = 2.42$ $p = .0536$ $N = 103$					

Statistical comparisons of the frequencies with which ADMs interact with their ministers reveal that ADMs are distinguished, albeit weakly, only on the departmental function dimension. Differences among ADM departmental function cohorts are registered in table 5-2 and, as can be seen, the conservation and development cohort is statistically distinguished from all others excepting the public security group. This nominally supports Proposition 1/Corollary 6 (The Effect of Departmental Function). It is assumed that the notably higher interactions among the ADM cohort in the economic and external affairs departments reflects government priorities in these areas, and the general level of interest that ministers have in the particulars of their operations.

In order to put table 5-2 into perspective, table 5-3 compares ADM per annum frequencies of interaction with all other system actors. The findings are analogous to the extent that the natural resource and economic development ADMs register a significantly higher average of interactions with key system actors than the other ADM department function cohorts. Although there are differences between the two, Proposition 1/Corollary 6 (The Effect of Departmental Function) is supported, albeit weakly, for the ADM

population, on account of the greater activity by the economic development and natural resource ADMs.

Table 5-3.—Department Function Cohorts Compared on Total Number of Per Annum Interactions with Key System Actors (ADMs)

<i>Department Functional Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>ADM Means</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Conservation, development, and promotion of physical resources (28)	2633	-	-	-	-
Public security and external affairs (18)	1841	386.48	-.26	2.24	.0273
Protection and development of human resources (37)	1766	466.14	-.19	1.70	.0926
Coordination of government (9)	1766	591.22	-.24	2.28	.0250
Public works, communication, and transportation (12)	1582	532.36	-.21	1.97	.0512
$R^2 = .28$ Adj. $R^2 = .04$ F-test = 2.11 $p = .0853$ $N = 104$					

The failure to find differences among ADM job and departmental size cohorts suggests Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions) and Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect) do not apply in ministerial relationships.

Most ADMs interviewed commented that, with a few exceptions, they normally do not initiate direct contact with their minister. This exchange is typical of many:

ECL: Do you initiate discussions with the minister?

ADM: Well, sometimes, I do but I don't like to do it.... I consider that very carefully.

ECL: Why is this?

ADM: I feel uncomfortable doing it, and whenever I do, I always tell the deputy that I have done it. And it's very, very important to the deputy that he knows every interaction that occurs, when, and on what.¹⁶

¹⁶ Official 128, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 6 May 1991.

This provides an additional perspective on previous observations that deputy ministers perform an important gatekeeping role in ADM ministerial contacts (Proposition 6/Corollary 3).

Even though ADMs are often loath to contact their ministers directly, they nonetheless seek out ways to interact with them. These contacts are important, as they provide opportunities to understand better the minister's and government's position on matters that are important to the ADM, as well as being important to the division/branch and the external agents with whom an ADM has regular contacts. Several ADMs commented that often the best opportunities to speak with their minister occur when they accompany the minister on an outing. At this time an ADM may be one of only a few people who are traveling with the minister and often is the most senior administrator in the entourage. As a consequence, there is often a natural flow of conversation between the minister and ADM. Some deputy ministers, knowing how important it is for their ADMs to know the minister's requirements, assign ADMs to tour with the minister. Other strategies include organizing meetings at which the minister is in attendance. These meetings may be sessions of the executive committee—in a few departments ministers regularly attend executive committee meetings—or they may involve the minister and the executive staff embarking on a retreat where departmental policy is mapped out. There are other instances of deputies bringing ADMs along to attend their regularly scheduled meeting with the minister. When this occurs, it is usually periodic and determined, to some extent, by the schedule of the Legislative Assembly. When the Legislature is in session these meetings are more frequent. Again, these observations reveal the degree to which the deputy minister guards the gate.

ADMs and ministers have greater need to meet when new policies or legislation emanating from an ADM's division are being brought forward. Ministers need to understand these initiatives to make a favourable presentation to cabinet and caucus

colleagues. During these times, when the minister is involved in deciding on the merits of proposals and working with department people to frame proposals, there are normally a number of direct contacts between ministers and ADMs.¹⁷ Similarly, during times of crisis ministers and administrators are drawn together.

A few ADMs enjoy uncommon access to their ministers because they are former administrators to politicians. They may know a number of ministers quite well, given their previous participation in the political administrative network. This familiarity facilitates access. It is often the case that these individuals have been placed in sensitive jobs which necessitate frequent ministerial contact at the political level. These placements may occur with or without the deputy's support.

ADMs also seek out communications with ministers for career purposes. As established in chapter 2, ministers can and do influence ADM appointments, as well as their continuing department tenure. Ministers sometimes sit in on hiring interviews and in certain cases lead them. ADMs also speak of blocked careers owing to ministerial assessments of their work. Where conflicts between ADMs and their ministers arise, it is the ADM who generally loses.

Communicating with the minister is also important in selling and advocating proposals to the government. Here it is useful to establish personal ties that promote trust and open exchanges, particularly since some ministers come to their portfolios suspicious of the permanent bureaucracy. Moreover, since deputy ministers are more readily replaced than ADMs, the deep-seated suspicion often lingers longer when it comes to ministerial relations with ADMs. Therefore, to counter such suspicions ADMs seek to know the minister and to enhance the person's recognition of them.

¹⁷ See A. F. Johnson, "The Minister as an Agent of Policy Change: The Case of Unemployment Insurance in the Seventies," *Canadian Public Administration* 24, no. 4 (Winter 1981): 612-33.

It is clear from the interviews that ADMs advocate and sell proposals directly to their ministers. Selling proposals emanating from the department, or the ADM's division, is far more common than being an advocate for extragovernmental interests. As mentioned earlier, the extent of direct representation depends upon deputy ministerial and ministerial encouragement and openness, and departmental protocol. The situation of ADMs is therefore different from that of deputies, for whom giving ministers advice is understood to be a central part of the job. An example of the ADM's advocacy role is offered by this central agency official who speaks of the requirement to communicate perceptions to the minister, and of the tactical considerations that shape the way he goes about doing this.

[At the ADM level in this department] what we have a role in doing is to identify trends to bring to the attention of our department [and] to the attention of our minister. And as is often the case, [you have] to keep up the pressure because people hear you the first time but it's not a priority for them. So, it is a question of continuing to push and highlight an issue until eventually people appreciate that it is significant and has to be addressed.... The first few years in office you get to figure [the minister] out. What I've now realized is you can make a proposal and he'll scowl at it and dismiss it, and you make it again in two week's time and he starts to think, well, maybe it has some merit. And you'll do it again in another two week's time and he's quite open to considering it. Now, at the same time, he'll still say no to some things. He has strong opinions on a lot of things. But he's definitely open to ideas.¹⁸

Far from having a passive role in communicating to ministers, and far from relying upon the deputy minister to argue their case before the minister, ADMs are often energetic advocates. That they enjoy access to the minister may be a function of their technical knowledge, the minister's preference for such communications, or a deputy minister's management philosophy. Likewise, some ADMs state in the interviews that direct access is sometimes promoted so that a deputy can stand apart from the proposal. Permitting ADMs to bring proposals to the minister allows the deputy minister room to compromise and otherwise maneuver in situations where flexibility is necessary for the

¹⁸ Official 223, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 9 May 1991.

proposal to succeed. In some instances, permitting ADM advocacy also can be viewed as a mechanism to identify the locus of responsibility in the organization. If the assistant deputy minister is to be a general manager in charge of a free-standing organizational entity, promoting direct access to the minister is a good management practice on the part of the DM.

Not unexpectedly, conflict and friction are sometimes found in relationships between ADMs and ministers. Indeed, the interviews suggest that friction is notably more prevalent in ministerial-ADM relations than in those between ADMs and deputies. One source of friction is the previously cited distrust that may exist between the minister and the departmental administration. Where this is found, the greatest strain is usually in the relationship between the deputy minister and the minister, but this is not always the case. Some ADMs shield their subordinates as they try to keep conflictive issues isolated in the executive group. However, deputy ministers also take on a similar burden in relation to their ADMs.

The interviews generally support Proposition 6/Corollary 2 (Political Content), which reflects the deputy ministerial literature claiming that deputies buffer ADMs. However, a point to be considered is that the corollary is defined more broadly and implies that deputy ministers do not always buffer ADMs.

Conflict between ADMs and ministers may exist at a personal level when it is simply a function of the minister taking a dislike to the ADM. Conversely, ADMs make reciprocal judgements, although it is clear that their professionalism and their instincts for career survival prevent them from commenting openly on such matters. Nonetheless, there can be serious friction and conflicts over ministerial policy directions and over ministerial intervention in administrative affairs. Friction and conflicts over ministerial roles most often surface when ministers interject themselves into the administration of the department. "Hands-on" ministers' intrusions into administrative policy routines are

usually unwelcome, as they disrupt the harmony in a department's administration. Administrators resent such "intrusions," as they believe their ministers do not possess the technical expertise and general knowledge that permit them to evaluate administrative practices and to set administrative priorities. Ministerial intervention may be motivated by short-term requirements that can introduce partisan criteria into allocation decisions and distort administrative priorities. Indeed, as the financial resources of the Alberta government diminish there appears to be an increased propensity to apply "political allocation" criteria when establishing program priorities. Not only are there fewer resources, but there is increased competition for them.¹⁹ Although some ministers are able to resist this political leverage, others appear to have strong arms in applying it.

Another source of friction, conflict, and administrator angst is generated when ministers visibly thrust ADMs into "political matters," which administrators define as matters involving a fundamental reorientation of state-society allocation arrangements. While ADMs will candidly admit that they have a role in shaping relationships between the state and society, and even in assisting to define the nature of new relationships, they object to being saddled with roles which can violate the canons of a neutral and apolitical public service. Regrettably, there are a few ministers who use senior officials as agents for championing fundamental changes, thereby permitting the minister to stand apart from the initiatives. These observations further support Proposition 6/Corollary 2 (Political Content), inasmuch as accounts by officials finding themselves in such circumstances imply that political concerns fall upon their shoulders.

¹⁹ Comments on these matters were always presented off-tape when particulars were discussed. Officials gave the impression that even though there is a strong good government ethos operating in the administration, and even though most ministers appear to uphold a tradition of good government, some ministers are not beyond exerting either direct or indirect pressure to ensure that those sympathetic to the regime continue to receive special consideration from the administration.

As conflict between bureaucrats and ministers usually results in bureaucratic turnover and bureaucratic accommodations being made, there is a continual process at work whereby the top echelon of the administration is being refashioned to reflect the minister's and government's priorities.²⁰ It would be wrong to suggest that ADMs and other senior administrators do not have their own resources to mitigate departmental politicalization; however, in times of financial restraint it is the politicians who enjoy the advantage of dictating to officialdom.

The Minister's Office

Assistant deputy ministers rate the minister's office as the most important actor with which they deal. The minister's office plays a key role in managing the communication flow between ADMs and ministers, as well as between the bureaucracy and other elements of the political system. Although ADMs normally have fewer contacts with the office than do deputy ministers, the ADM average of 195 contacts a year makes it clear that interaction occurs several times a week.

Table 5-4 reveals a weak difference between program delivery ADMs and their planning peers, and a stronger difference between them and the administrative cohort in interactions with the minister's office. This evidence suggests an amendment for Proposition 9/Corollary 3 (Distinguishing Characteristics of Program Managers), insofar as program delivery ADMs relate more readily to the minister's office. This also supports Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions).

²⁰ During the first years Lougheed was in office this especially appears to have been the case. At the time interviews and research were conducted less refashioning was evident. However, since Ralph Klein assumed office in 1992 with an aggressive down-sizing and balanced budget agenda, the process appears again to have been in full swing.

Table 5-4.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Interaction with the Minister's Office

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Program delivery (49)	262.55	-	-	-	-
Planning and policy (21)	133.91	69.31	-.19	1.86	.0664
Administrative and operational support (33)	132.36	59.84	-.23	2.18	.0320
R ² = .058 Adj. R ² = .039 F-test = 3.054 p = .0516 N = 103					

Table 5-5 compares ADM job function cohort interactions with attention to respondents' total per annum interactions with others. As with table 5-3, it is shown to establish the relationship between table 5-4 findings and those of the sample on the strength of its F-test statistic. Table 5-5 fails to support Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions), but suggests that Proposition 9/Corollary 3 (Distinguishing Characteristics of Program Managers) might be sharpened to register the difference between program delivery and administrative support ADMs, given the weak t-test probability value distinguishing those cohorts.

Table 5-5.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Number of Per Annum Interactions with Key System Actors

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Program delivery (49)	2264	-	-	-	-
Planning and policy (22)	1784	400.64	-.13	1.20	.2336
Administrative and operational support (33)	1594	351.55	-.20	1.91	.0595
R ² = .0369 Adj. R ² = .0177 F-test = 1.97 p = .1443 N = 103					

Stronger differences among ADM cohorts is associated with departmental size (F-test = 3.93, p = .0107). Table 5-6 reveals that officials in the smaller departments have

more frequent contact with the ministerial office. The table clearly reveals this in the case of the medium-sized department cohort, but it is also the case when the interactions of the small-sized cohort are compared with those of the larger departments. The results do not support Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect), which suggests an opposite result. Again, presumably, ADMs in small departments have greater opportunity to interact with the minister's office simply because there are fewer of them in a department. One can speculate that among the principals there may also be more familiarity simply because there are more frequent opportunities to interact.

Table 5-6.—ADM Departmental Size Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Interaction with the Minister's Office

<i>Departmental Size Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Medium-sized department (22)	346.73	-	-	-	-
Small-sized department (14)	247.14	88.92	-.13	1.12	.2654
Large-sized department (30)	137.67	73.00	-.35	2.86	.0051
Extra-large-sized department (37)	130.46	70.02	-.38	3.09	.0026
$R^2 = .106$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .079$ $F\text{-test} = 3.93$ $p = .0107$ $N = 103$					

No statistical difference is found among the departmental function cohorts when compared on their frequency of interactions with the minister's office ($F\text{-test} = 1.421$, $p = .2328$). This result is somewhat surprising, as the natural resource and economic development ADMs differ statistically in the higher frequency of their ministerial interactions.

A sizable amount of ministerial office communication occurs between the ADM and the minister's executive assistant. While ministers and officials have opportunities to communicate directly with one another, ministerial assistants play a key role in regulating ministerial communications, and in presenting a ministerial "face" to the department as

well as others. As one senior official, who is himself a former ministerial executive assistant, comments:

Any ADM that has a brain in his head gets to know the minister's executive assistant and the other staff well, and works with them. He has to be nuts if he doesn't and I am sure the deputy is in the same situation.²¹

According to Donald Savoie, several factors can generate friction between senior bureaucrats and ministerial staff. One source of friction for some senior officials is having to deal with junior staffers. Savoie claims, "It is not uncommon...to see deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers insisting on dealing directly with the minister even on issues that could be resolved by the minister's staff."²²

Undoubtedly much of this is simply an exercising of egos. However, in line with J. R. Mallory's observation that there is a mismatch between senior bureaucrat and staffer seniority, training, and perhaps even competence, one can speculate these are antecedents to friction.²³ Another source of bureaucratic chagrin is rooted in the ministerial staffer's competition with the deputy and senior officialdom for the minister's ear. By Savoie's account, when departmental policy proposals are being developed within the department, the bureaucracy tends to close ranks against ministerial advisors. Moreover, Savoie maintains that the management of bureaucracy-ministerial office relationships by permanent officials, an important matter for Mallory, is realized to a surprising degree:

We discovered that more often than not a clear distinction exists between the minister's office and the department. This distinction means that few, if any, assistants are involved with what the department is doing before it surfaces to the minister, while conversely few in the department know what ministerial assistants actually do. In numerous ministers' offices, for example, ministerial assistants are strictly concerned with partisan politics, relations with the media, political appointments, and liaison with MPs, other minister's offices, and local party people.

²¹ Official 432, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 9 May 1991.

²² Donald Savoie, "The Minister's Staff: A Need for Reform," *Canadian Public Administration* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1983): 516.

²³ J. R. Mallory, "The Minister's Office Staff: An Unreformed Part of the Public Service," *Canadian Public Administration* 10 (March 1967): 25-34.

The necessary liaison work between the minister's office and the department and the coordination of briefing material and correspondence are the responsibility of permanent officials assigned to the minister's office.²⁴

Alberta ministerial offices include executive assistants (EAs), special assistants, a smattering of policy advisors, and media specialists, in addition to a complement of secretaries. Nevertheless, Alberta minister offices are not as large or richly staffed as their federal counterparts. Although several departments have young and promising managers in the minister's office to facilitate links with the department, the usual practice is for ministerial EAs from outside the public service to take on these responsibilities. Thus, in some ways, the situation that exists in Alberta resembles that existing at the federal level nearly 25 years ago, of which Mallory wrote. Therefore, it is not surprising that problems discussed by Mallory in departmental-ministerial office relationships are found in Alberta. Among these is that of EAs' suppressing ADM and deputy access to the minister. More vexing is the propensity for some ministerial officials to act forcefully, even rudely, in the name of the minister. Although in many cases an EA's behaviour reflects the minister's disposition toward the senior bureaucracy, in other cases it is the projection of the EA's personality and world view. In such circumstances, relations between the minister's office and the administration can deteriorate. Given the strong allegiances that often exist within the minister's office, with many ministerial assistants knowing their minister through extragovernmental working relationships and social ties, conflicts of this nature may not be easily resolved. However, the findings of this study, similar to those voiced by Savoie, provide little evidence that EAs have strong influence with ministers in policy matters. Communications between the minister's office personnel and ADMs is normally of a work-a-day nature, with much of it involving responding to inquiries that have been made of the minister's office. ADMs seem to contact the

²⁴ Savoie, "The Minister's Staff," 518.

minister's office freely, although it appears that most communications are initiated by the office rather than vice-versa.

ADM Interactions with Peers

ADMs were asked about the nature of contacts with their ADM colleagues, colleagues in other departments, and, more broadly, whether or not they possessed a "college of peers." What was being sought was the existence of a cohort of professionals from whom ADMs sought advice.

Evidence of the existence of such networks is found in studies of public administration in Europe. Suleiman writes of strong horizontal communication and career linkages among members of the Grand Corps in his classic study of French higher public administration.²⁵ In a similar description of the administrative class of the British higher civil service, officials are found in a variety of different departments but generally maintain connections and allegiances to the administrative class itself.²⁶ In Canada, professional and administrative class allegiances appear much weaker. The federal government high-fliers of the Trudeau era approximate one another in that many spent time in the Finance Department and other central agencies, and circulated through a number of departments holding administrative and policy positions.²⁷ However, these federal servants were not analogous to the British administrative class, and certainly did not appear to have the professional cohesiveness of the French Grand Corps.

Within the Alberta public service there is no single source from which top officials are recruited, and no strictly administrative class or general corps of

²⁵ See Ezra N. Suleiman, *Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy in France: The Administrative Elite* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), 272, and more generally chapter 10.

²⁶ See Peta E. Sheriff, "Unrepresentative Bureaucracy," *Sociology* 8, no. 3 (September 1974): 447-62.

²⁷ See Colin Campbell and George Szablowski, *The Superbureaucrats: Structure and Behaviour in Central Agencies* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979).

administrators. Yet there are "pockets" of collegial relationships. Most notable are the relationships existing among administrative and operational support personnel, particularly financial and personnel administrators. The list might also include planning and policy personnel, of whom a number have moved laterally within the Alberta Public Service. In short, there is evidence pointing to formalized contact networks, if not to peer colleges. These observations, which shortly will be corroborated with supporting statistical evidence, point to the special relationship with central agencies depicted in Proposition 9/Corollary 5 (Relating to Central Agencies).

Most ADMs who acknowledged having a college of peers stated that it is very loosely defined. The usual response was that the peer group is defined through the respondent's ties and not as an independent network. That is, generally the college of peers exists as a bundle of dyadic relationships between the respondent and others. Moreover, these networks exist for pragmatic business-related reasons that usually involve acquiring information and facilitating work. The networks that ADMs describe are akin to those of Kotter's general managers:

The GMs developed cooperative relationships to and among peers, outsiders, and their bosses' bosses, and their subordinates' subordinates. Indeed, they developed relationships among any and all people upon whom they felt dependent because of their jobs....²⁸

An illustrative comment underscoring the point is made by this ADM:

I have tentacles out into almost every department in terms of the people that I consider to be [competent], or advocates, or, if I need the system changed, change agents. If I need simple support in terms of a decision, I will go to those that I know have influence over their own hierarchy.²⁹

Most ADMs' peer colleges are defined within the interaction networks that develop in the course of an ADM's work. Therefore it is not surprising that most ADMs

²⁸ Kotter, *The General Managers*, 67.

²⁹ Official 433, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 8 May 1991.

include departmental ADM colleagues among the membership of their college of peers; even less surprising is that a number include their subordinates and the deputy minister. The domain of peers is defined as those whom the ADM can *trust* and whose judgement is valued, both of which appear to be universal features that officials cite in defining the membership of their college of peers. Former subordinates and superiors are almost as likely to be members of an ADM's peer college as present-day ones. This is important for officials who have been in the system for some time, since this group can become quite large and be interwoven throughout the government bureaucracies and extragovernmental sectors. An ADM coming into a department brings along peer network contacts and friendships which have been established over the years, and may rely on these contacts for help in the new environment. For example, a former academic speaks of his "college of peers" in the following way:

ECL: Do you have a group of peers or associates with whom you are in regular contact and upon whom you rely for support and advice?

ADM: Well, I don't know that I would call it a group. I suppose there are individuals, depending on the circumstance, and a number of them I suppose, not surprisingly, would be at the University. There is particularly one person at the University who hired me way back when and I respect his ability to deal with an issue without bias, or with a bias that I might not have. I use him. There's a fellow that used to be one of the branch directors [in this division]. He's now a regional director general [in the federal government] outside of our region, and I pick his brain.³⁰

The foregoing indirectly supports the supposition contained within Proposition 2/Corollary 4 (Trust and Confidence). Specifically, the commentary suggests that developing trust and confidence is a key feature of high level administration. Inasmuch as this is the case, one can observe how personal contact networks grow over time, and why they include former and current close working associates.

³⁰ Official 235, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 27 May 1991.

Table 5-7.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Interaction with Others at the Same Rank in Department

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Administrative and operational support (33)	435.27	-	-	-	-
Planning and policy (21)	303.24	82.02	-.18	1.61	.1106
Program delivery (49)	275.59	66.17	-.27	2.41	.0176
R ² = .057 Adj. R ² = .038 F-test = 3.042 p = .0522 N = 103					

The most active peer relationships reported by ADMs are found between themselves and their fellow departmental ADMs. Administrative and operational support ADMs register the highest level of interaction with their ADM peers, which is notably greater than the average posted by their program delivery and policy ADM colleagues. As is clear from table 5-7, the difference between program delivery and administrative support officials is statistically significant (t-value = 2.41, p = .0176), which strengthens the supposition in Proposition 9/Corollary 1(b) that supporting staff managers are distinguished from other managerial cohorts by their higher frequency of department peer contacts. Since they are the gatekeepers and stewards of important resources, there are compelling reasons for them to be in frequent contact with their departmental ADM peers, and for policy and program delivery ADMs to be in contact with them. The nature of these contacts is revealed in this excerpt:

My guess is that in the course of a normal week I would be in touch with all the ADMs in the department outside of the executive committee. My contact tends to be quite frequent. My style is a lot of face-to-face discussion.... I find myself moving around the executive floors of the department on a daily basis, usually meeting in the offices of my peers. The kind of business that we talk about most often tends to be policy in terms of financial affairs of their particular organization...my role tends to be in support of their type of activities and my style tends to try and support their activities.³¹

³¹ Official 154, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 2 May 1991.

While there are compelling reasons for program delivery and planning and policy ADMs situated in the same department to contact one another, the compulsion is not as great as that which stimulates the administrative and operational support executives' interactions. Indeed, in some cases program delivery ADMs interviewed stated that they have relatively little contact with other program delivery ADMs in their departments, while in other cases program delivery officials claimed to have more contact with counterparts in other departments. The explanation may be that some departments exist more as general holding companies, while others are close-knit integrated operations.

Policy and planning ADMs are situated somewhere between the program and administrative cohorts in terms of their reported level of interactions with departmental peers. This positioning is logical to the extent that planning ADMs are normally responsible for dealing with all divisions, unlike program delivery ADMs. As previously mentioned, they qualify as supporting staff managers in Corson and Paul's classification scheme. Although the situations differ within departments, planning ADMs generally focus on work not involving the continuous interaction associated with protecting departmental resources, as is the case with administrative and operational support personnel. An exception to the general rule would be the Department of Education, wherein the deputy minister seeks to establish a "policy-driven" organization in which the role of the principal policy official is central. This leads the policy executive to have frequent contact with peers. In other departments, where the policy unit's mandate is weaker, or its purpose is contested, contacts between the top policy official and other ADMs may be infrequent.³² Put more formally, the level of contact between departmental policy and program delivery ADMs is influenced by mutual interdependencies of the program divisions, the centrality of the department policy and planning function, and the

³² See Ken Langhorn and Bob Hinings, "Integrated Planning and Organizational Conflict," *Canadian Public Administration* 30, no. 7 (Winter 1987): 550-53.

extent to which officials deliberately seek out one another. As is the case with ADM and deputy relations, personality and personal regard influence interactions.

Contacts with Officials in Other Departments

Interdepartmental contact networks, especially those which include a formal body where ADMs meet to discuss business, also provide a medium around which peer colleges develop. Among the more strongly defined colleges discovered in the interviews is one that comprises ADMs who sit on the Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC). The existence of the NRAC, and the general requirement that natural resource sector ADMs operating in these areas coordinate their efforts, has led members to feel free to pick up the phone and communicate with one another on a broad range of matters. One of the senior ADMs involved in this network offers this perspective:

As far as other departments are concerned, I have in a number of cases a personal relationship with my counterparts, with the ADMs in other departments. If I were to put a number on it, I would say there would be at least a half dozen. We talk to each other on the phone—on some issues, daily—and we correspond by fax and memo, and are attending similar meetings. So the relationship of ADMs between departments, particularly those departments where some responsibilities overlap, where programs interface [is very close].... I am on a first name and personal relationship basis with [these] ADMs.³³

It is worth noting that not all ADMs sitting on the NRAC are part of the collegial group. Thus, while formal venues and the routines of interdepartmental business provide the basis for peer communication, they are by no means the only factors cementing collegial relations. Beyond the exchange of information, collegial networks also provide a venue for testing ideas and discussing proposals which officials do not feel comfortable rehearsing on others. And, of course, the more intimate peer networks provide an avenue for letting off steam.

³³ Official 184, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 1 May 1991.

Literature-derived suppositions are more specific about interdepartmental relationships with peers. First, Proposition 9/Corollary 5 (Relating to Central Agencies) presumes supporting staff managers communicate more readily with central agencies than do program managers and managers of professionals. Second, program managers are assumed to be more attentive to managing constituent relationships which for present purposes need only include peers in other departments (see Proposition 9/Corollary 3c). More broadly, there is the overarching assumption of Proposition 9 that the principal job cohorts will differ in orientations to other system actors. Also to be reckoned are the differences which may be associated with departmental size (Proposition 1/Corollary 3) and departmental function (Proposition 1/Corollary 6).

Comparisons employing multiple regression analysis reveal no significant differences among the ADM job cohorts (F-test = .647, $p = .5258$, adjusted R-squared value = -.007) when compared on the frequencies with which they interact with peers in other departments. Indeed, among the cohorts, the planning and policy ADMs register the highest job function cohort average ($\mu = 131.91$). Therefore, surprisingly, Proposition 9 corollaries are not supported. It must be added that all job cohorts actively interact with peers in other departments.

Comparisons of ADM interaction with extra-departmental peers defined in terms of functional cohorts also fail to show significant distinctions (F-test = .362, $p = .8354$, adjusted R-squared value = -.026). Thus, Proposition 1/Corollary 6 (The Effect of Departmental Function) is not sustained.

Table 5-8 reveals differences among the smallest departmental cohort and larger ones. ADMs from the smallest departments average notably more interactions with peers in other departments. It is tempting to suggest that these results are promoted by the same dynamics reported in interactions with the deputy minister and minister's office. That is, ADMs in smaller departments enjoy greater "intimacy" and opportunity to interact with

others, and this promotes greater interaction frequencies. When it comes to relationships outside the department, the point is not logically compelling. A plausible explanation for the differences found on table 5-8 is that the difference is associated with the purposes of the smallest departments.

Table 5-8.—ADM Departmental Size Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Interaction with Peers in Other Departments

<i>Departmental Size Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Small-sized department (14)	177.14	-	-	-	-
Extra-large-sized department (37)	99.89	70.02	-.38	3.09	.0026
Medium-sized department (22)	96.82	88.92	-.13	1.12	.2654
Large-sized department (30)	85.60	73.00	.35	2.86	.0051
$R^2 = .237$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .056$ $F\text{-test} = 1.96$ $p = .1243$ $N = 103$					

Small departments such as Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs (FIGA), Technology, Research and Telecommunications (TRT), and Executive Council have important coordinating roles which are not defined for most other departments. FIGA and TRT function in something akin to a ministry of state role,³⁴ although FIGA can as easily claim to operate as a true central agency. In any event, these departments are responsible for the coordination of government functions, along with Executive Council, insofar as external relations with other governments and industry are concerned. As a consequence, their ADMs should presumably register higher frequencies of interdepartmental peer contacts. An obvious question is why statistically significant differences do not appear when ADM department function cohorts are compared on the same variable. The point is especially pertinent when considering the coordination of government department ADMs.

³⁴ See Kenneth Kernaghan and David Siegel, *Public Administration in Canada: A Text* (Agincourt, Ont.: Methuen, 1987), 158–61, for a discussion of ministry of state organizations.

who would seem to exhibit higher interaction levels in their coordination efforts. Although ADMs in these central agencies have higher levels of interaction with peers in other departments, they do not statistically differ on this count. To the extent that Treasury and Personnel Administration Office ADMs are “guardians” of the public finances and the merit principle, it may be that they are not proactive in their external contacts.

There are strong ties among certain finance ADMs.³⁵ Administrative and operational support officials exhibit frequent peer interactions, as they are part of the government’s network of authority. Officials in the finance field are especially close-knit and had an ongoing peer network long before the provincial controller provided a formal venue through which senior financial administration officials could interrelate. Interviewees also suggest that administrative and operational support ADMs regularly contact peers about financial operating systems and personnel management innovations.

No discussion of peer colleges would be complete without mention of an informal network of female executives that has existed since the late 1980s.³⁶ Women in this network share experiences and information to help each other to reach the top levels of the bureaucratic system. This point is underscored by an interviewee:

There is an informal network of executive women that I’m very interested in and which I keep in very close touch with. Because there’s so very few executive women in government, when we sit down together the issues that we face are pretty much the same. So that’s an important network to me in terms of intellectual, psychological, and spiritual support. We’re sort of in this business together and as there are not very many of us we find it useful to stay in touch. We bounce ideas and experiences off each other and talk about strategies for dealing with issues....

³⁵ This is asserted notwithstanding the failure to discover strong statistical differences between ADM job function cohorts and interaction with peers in other departments, as well as a similar inability to distinguish administrative support ADMs from other cohorts in frequency of interactions with Treasury, Executive Council, and Personnel Administration Office officials.

³⁶ Many of the women do not qualify as ADMs—nonetheless the group includes ADMs, and apparently the one female deputy minister.

We're all looking at how to do the best that we're doing and how to succeed with what we're doing—we have a common agenda.³⁷

This network exists apart from the activities of the Personnel Administration Office's (PAO) Women's Program. Yet, many of the women who participate informally are also active supporters of the PAO's formal initiative to enhance the status of women in the public service.

Several officials speak of other collegial links which are organized around membership in a variety of national and international professional organizations.³⁸ These networks provide opportunities to obtain new intellectual and technical understandings, to place Alberta practices and policies in perspective, and to conduct intergovernmental business outside formally defined channels. Among the ADM job function cohorts, planning and policy officials are the most active in communicating with members of their principal profession. However, they are not statistically distinguished from the other cohorts in these relations (F-test = 1.47, p. = .2342, adjusted R-squared value = .009). This is also the case when comparisons are made using importance scores registered by the three job function cohorts. There is no significant difference, even though administrative and operational support officials post slightly higher average scores for relating with members of their principal profession.

For some ADMs, connections with external professional organizations provide means to clarify technical and ethical standards and practices which may become unfocused within the narrow operating confines of the provincial government. One official comments:

The one area that I consult outside is if I get tied into the professional ethics issues. That's one where I would cast a fairly wide net. It's come up a couple of times and I

³⁷ Official 311, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 14 May 1991.

³⁸ Although this discussion strays into the realm of extragovernmental connections, nonetheless, it facilitates a logical flow in the commentary on peer relationships.

have never gone to the Treasury people to discuss an ethical question at the first drop. I go to my fellow professional accountants in the government, but not in Treasury first. And then I have gone to people that I know in the [accounting] profession...trying to figure out what the situation is.... Then I phone Treasury and say here's the situation and here's how I think we should handle it.³⁹

By way of reprise, it is emphasized that peer networks have different characters. A number are defined by work-a-day structural arrangements that promote interaction and interdependence. The most prevalent of these are found within a department, although there are also interdepartmental standing and ad hoc committees which facilitate peer interaction. Individual ADM peer networks extend outside government and often encompass persons with whom an official has been involved at an earlier time. They also include persons with whom officials have regularized job relations.

Officials may use networks of trusted peers to expedite business and obtain information. There are examples of "free-standing" networks in which members are in frequent contact with another. Among these are several in the financial administration and personnel areas, one of which is organized around the Natural Resources Advisory Committee composed of more than half a dozen senior resource and economic development ADMs, and the previously described network of executive women. Undoubtedly there are other freestanding networks, although their membership is likely to be smaller and their consequences less pronounced.

Professional associations also provide a venue for professional interaction and an avenue for officials to pursue inquiries into ethical questions that they may hesitate to

³⁹ Official 480, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 9 May 1991. Academics are rarely mentioned as being included in the peer college. There are exceptions, one of which was a former chair of the University of Alberta's Department of Political Science, who served for several years as the deputy minister for the Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs Department. As a consequence, senior officials in the department have a strong academic orientation and include academics among members of their peer college. Executives in the Department of Education, the Culture and Multiculturalism department, Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, and the Personnel Administration Office also named academics as members of their peer networks. Although it is likely that if pressed, more senior officials would have conceded the importance of academic contacts, it is telling that academics are not readily identified as being members of ADM peer networks.

raise within the public service. Particularly important is that affiliation with these associations provides professionals with a perspective. The more discrete "peer colleges" that develop out of these associations provide a basis for sustaining discourse between sessions or for engaging in a more directed dialogue when the association convenes. Speaking about two of his valued professional "colleges of peers," a senior Treasury official observes:

Number one there's my counterparts in the other provinces. We meet once a year, we've gotten to know each other, we trust each other, we've evolved [in forming] standard rules, and we'll talk about bank performance but we won't release confidential fees. We are open and honest, we sometimes have a few too many drinks some nights, especially when our friend from Newfoundland brings all the free screech. And you trust these guys, they've been through it, they know what it's like and the rest of it. The second "college of peers" is a group that's risen out of the Cash Management Association of Canada. [It comprises] about a dozen guys and ladies whom I trust, who I've known for some time. Some have changed jobs, some are with banks, some are now in the private sector. They're the people I [consult] when we've got a problem. We like each other socially. Some of them have moved to Toronto now, so if they happen to be out here, rather than leaving them in a hotel I'll ask them out to the house...that type of thing.⁴⁰

To conclude, the preponderance of peer networks develop out of working relationships established in the normal conduct of business. In recent years internal committees have mushroomed, as greater premiums are placed on coordinating administrative activities and as hierarchical structures are being flattened. A deputy minister who first joined the Alberta public service in the 1960s, and who has been at the apex of the organizational structure for years, comments:

[Today] you see a lot more interdepartmental cooperation, you see a lot more interdepartmental committees, you see a lot more exchange of information and the whole question of strategy being discussed in a larger context. You see [cooperation and collaboration] being carried forward at the deputy minister level. It is being carried forward at the ADM level, at the director level, at the regional level. You see a lot of people looking beyond the confines of their own ministry and understanding a larger context in terms of what they are doing in relation to other

⁴⁰ Official 374, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 12 June 1991.

provincial ministries, other levels of government, and other stakeholders—the private sector, business interests, regional community interests.⁴¹

He adds that in this context it is hardly surprising to find an explosion of committees and other consultative machinery, as well as the development of denser peer networks.

5.2. ADM Interactions with Principal Actors of a Legislative Affairs Network

Legislative Assembly Committees

ADM-Legislative Assembly committee relationships were not discussed directly in the interviews, and therefore the account of interactions must rely on the meagre statistical data collected from the survey. These data reveal that ADMs infrequently interact with Legislative Assembly committees ($\mu = 1.65$ per annum). Moreover, the data show that ADMs generally consider dealings with the committees to be of little importance to their jobs.

Program delivery ADMs are the most active in their relations with Legislative Assembly committees ($\mu = 2.45$ per annum), but they are not statistically distinguished from other ADM job function cohorts (F-test = 1.05, $p = .3525$, adjusted R-squared value = .0001). No important differences are found when ADM-committee interactions are compared with departmental size and departmental function cohorts. Thus, none of the differences supposed in the propositions and corollaries are found when ADM-legislative committee interactions are analyzed.

A third (42) of the ADM respondents report some form of annual contact with Legislative Assembly committees. If totalled, their contacts with these committees add up to a minuscule 166 interactions over a year. Twenty of the respondents consider their interactions with Legislative Assembly committees to be important or very important.

⁴¹ Al Craig, Deputy Minister of Career and Economic Development, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 13 May 1991.

Most of these officials are administrative ADMs, and this finding suggests that the principal connection between the legislature and ADMs is through the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. This committee investigates the previous year's expenditures, and is chaired by a member of the opposition.⁴² Ministers and officials are called before the committee to answer specific questions concerning the previous year's budgetary expenditures. Not all departments are brought before the committee in a given year. Moreover, since the legislature is so dominated by the Tories, ministers often are not questioned aggressively. This is not always the case when the members turn their attention to top officials. In this questioning, it appears that although the deputy ministers bear the burden, ADMs are present to support the deputies.

Government Caucus Committees⁴³

ADM interactions with caucus committees are even more infrequent than those which occur with Legislative Assembly committees. ADMs interact with caucus committees a meagre 1.52 times per annum. Likewise, across the whole of the ADM cohort, contacts with caucus committees are unimportant ($\mu = 1.46$, the scale high is 5.0).

⁴² See Frederick C. Engelmann, "The Legislature," in *Government and Politics in Alberta*, ed. Allan Tupper and Roger Gibbins (Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta Press, 1992), 137-66. There are eight other standing committees in addition to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. These are: the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Saving Trust Fund Act, the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, the Standing Committee on Standing Orders and Printing, the Standing Committee on Private Bills, the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices, the Standing Committee on Law and Regulations, the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services, and the Standing Committee on Public Affairs. According to Engelmann, the last is merely a manifestation of the Committee of the Whole.

⁴³ Discussion of the specifics of caucus committee arrangements contained in the following paragraphs relate to the caucus committee structure between 1989 and 1992. This system was dismantled soon after Premier Klein took office and replaced with a radically different committee system. Therefore the data apply to the old system.

Moreover, comparisons among job description cohorts, department functional cohorts, and departmental size cohorts fail to reveal any statistically significant difference.⁴⁴

Not all ADMs' caucus relationships are unimportant, as 21 of 102 ADMs responding to this item marked responses of "4" or "5" on a five-point scale. It is also clear from the evidence that although not many ADMs appear before caucus committees, a few do so relatively frequently. Six percent claim to deal with the committees on a weekly basis or more often, while another 30 percent have occasional dealings running from yearly meetings to bimonthly encounters.

The interviews suggest that ADM presence before caucus committees depends on the interplay of several factors: the existence of committees having watching briefs over a department, government priorities, and the willingness of ministers and deputies to have ADMs make presentations to caucus committees.⁴⁵ While most departments fit under the rubric of one or more of the committees, some departments such as Treasury do not appear to have clear contact points within the caucus structure. Indeed, of the 14 Treasury officials responding to the questionnaire, none indicated that they had any contact with the caucus committees. Other departments in which no official reports contact with caucus committees are Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Culture and Multiculturalism, Energy, Solicitor General, and the Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunications.

⁴⁴ ADM job function cohorts compared on frequency of interactions with caucus committees produced the following general statistics: F-test = 1.32, p. = .2712, adjusted R-squared value = .006. ADM departmental function cohorts produce these statistics: F-test = .519, p. = .7217, adjusted R-squared value = -.019. ADM departmental size cohorts register the following statistics: F-test = .448, p. = .7193, adjusted R-squared value = -.017.

⁴⁵ The caucus committee structure of Don Getty's twenty-second legislature government included Edmonton and Calgary area caucus committees and seven functional committees (i.e., Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Economic Affairs, Irrigation, Education, Forestry and Natural Resources, Health and Social Services, and Environment). See Alberta Teachers' Association, *A Guide to Alberta's Twenty Second Legislature* (Edmonton, Alberta: ATA, n.d.), 35.

Oddly, no contact with caucus committees was reported by Executive Council respondents.⁴⁶ An explanation for this anomaly is that executive level officials within the Executive Council office are not directly involved in the routing of caucus business. A senior Executive Council official proclaimed that the responsibility for caucus committee liaison lay with the cabinet deputy secretary, and that in his position he had no dealings with caucus matters.

Government priorities influence administrator-caucus committee relations in three ways. First, in the case of departments such as Energy and Technology, Research and Telecommunications (TRT), even though there are caucus committees that address issues pertinent to these ministries (i.e., Energy and Economic Planning), it is cabinet committees that exercise hegemony in these areas. Caucus committees play decidedly secondary roles. Therefore, it is not surprising to discover that officials in Energy and TRT have little contact with caucus committees.

A second government priority is retaining the Tory rural electoral base, which has become the bastion of the government's electoral power. To this end a premium is placed on ensuring that policy initiatives that affect rural constituencies are vetted by rural MLAs. Caucus committees are central here, as they are dominated by rural Tory MLAs, and they refine many of the proposals for the whole of caucus. Consequently, ADMs in departments that have a strong rural focus often appear frequently before caucus committees. This observation is borne out statistically, as ADMs in the Agriculture, Forestry, and Environment departments report relatively high levels of contact with caucus committees. The rural connection is emphasized in this veteran ADM's comments:

⁴⁶ The finding is odd in that descriptions of the routing of policy proposals provided by respondents and in published accounts show that routing of proposals to caucus committees occurs through the Executive Council machinery. See Alberta Personnel Administration Office, "From Idea to Legislation," *CON-NEXUS* 4, no. 2 (Edmonton, Alberta: PAO, April 1991).

My experience has been that the use of caucus committees tends to centre around rural impact. In other words, what you are doing that is going to have an effect on the rural areas...[and this is important] because the current government's caucus is so heavily weighted toward the rural areas. And so, [a department's dealings with caucus committee involve] information giving and receiving, and preconditioning for policy initiatives that you want to bring down. You do not want a caucus revolt. You know our government's caucus is quite...a strong organization in terms of a veto role. They are not so strong in terms of a policy initiation role but they tend to have been more a veto...and if they are going to veto they tend to get involved in the other.⁴⁷

Another ADM also states:

Caucus committees, I have a fair bit of contact with them, particularly the committees that relate to our business like...the Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the Irrigation Caucus Committees. Quite often...in the preliminary preparation...of RFDs [requests for decision], with the minister's permission, of course, and with his presence, you make presentations to the caucus committees [which] the RFD relates to [in terms of] their interest and their concern. We...test the contents of those RFDs with those caucus committees, so quite often we have presentations to them, and of course, all of our legislation, and any change to our legislation, goes through the caucus review, so we have a lot of contact with them in that respect.⁴⁸

His last statement introduces a third way in which government priorities affect an official's appearance before caucus committees. All proposed legislation, including bills and regulations, is reviewed by cabinet and caucus committees as part of the institutionalized policy process. Therefore, departments having a heavy legislative agenda reflecting the government's priorities will have business before caucus committees more frequently than those with light agendas. Consequently, ADMs in departments with heavy legislative and regulatory agendas have greater opportunities to address caucus committees.

Ministerial and deputy preferences as to who relates to whom also have a bearing on the frequency with which ADMs appear before caucus committees. Ministerial preferences appear to be especially important, as ministers are the key figures in caucus liaison. Some ministers actively engaging caucus committees find it useful to bring senior

⁴⁷ Official 501, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 3 May 1991.

⁴⁸ Official 184, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 1 May 1991.

departmental staff to meetings to answer MLAs' questions and make presentations. Other ministers eschew bringing officials to caucus or cabinet committee meetings, and when they do it is usually the deputy. Beyond mere preference, the extent to which a minister is willing to involve officials turns on the minister's personal knowledge of matters at hand, and the trust that the minister has in senior officials. Deputy ministers may also insert themselves into the caucus-ADM relationship by insisting that they are the only ones who should brief caucus committees. This may be tied to a desire to control communications, although some deputies seek to maintain a gulf between politics and administration by limiting their subordinates' appearances.

Government Members and Opposition MLAs

There were 31 government backbenchers and 24 opposition members in the twenty-second Alberta legislature—a ratio of 1.30 to 1.0. The frequency of interaction between the officials surveyed and government backbenchers averages 11.9 times per annum, while the average reported for opposition MLAs is 2.4. Thus, senior officials interact with government backbenchers nearly four times as frequently as they do with opposition members.

A 4-to-1 ratio also exists at the ADM level, which suggests a government policy, stated or otherwise, that regulates senior official-parliamentarian interactions. One ADM's discussion of the matter is representative of many responses captured during the interviews:

I have a lot of contact with the government MLAs; I don't deal with the opposition MLAs. Any inquiries that come in to me from opposition MLAs I simply tell them that their inquiries must go through the minister's office. I don't deal with them. The government MLAs, I deal with them directly, but I'm very careful to inform the minister. When I respond to them officially, I respond through the minister's office, even though the inquiry might have come directly to me.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Official 184, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 1 May 1991.

Government departments are not beyond working with local MLAs, nor do they appear to be immune from being drawn into the government's efforts to assist its members in being favourably portrayed to the public. This is clear from this ADM's comment:

We have designed a number of our programs so that the request for service comes through the MLA and is, in fact, delivered back through the MLA...[this is especially the circumstance] in cases where we...[are awarding] grants. So they are involved. We have newsletters and other mechanisms to keep the MLAs informed as to what we are doing as a department so they can speak intelligently with their own community. I do believe the minister feels it important to keep MLAs involved in the planning process and much [planning] is done over there in terms of, for example, what offices might be closed, what offices are going to be left open? ...[And considerations are taken into account] like, who's in trouble? Who's going to need this? So the political perspective is also taken into account in terms of our programs from a local perspective.⁵⁰

The MLAs of whom the official speaks are government members.

There are statistical differences in the propensity of ADMs to engage backbenchers. Program delivery ADMs average 18.84 contacts with backbenchers per annum, while administrative and operational support ADMs average only 4.40 contacts a year. These differences, apparent in table 5-9, support Proposition 9/Corollary 4 (Relating to External Constituents), which maintains that program managers more readily communicate with extragovernmental actors than do supporting staff managers.⁵¹ The results also bolster Proposition 9/Corollary 3c, that program managers are more active in their attention to managing constituent relationships.

⁵⁰ Official 433, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 8 May 1991.

⁵¹ It might be argued that government backbenchers are technically not extragovernmental actors. The point is accepted as correct and reasonable; however, for present purposes it is equally reasonable to define backbenchers as being among those with whom ADMs must maintain constituent-styled relationships.

Table 5-9.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Interaction with Government Backbenchers

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Program delivery (49)	18.84				
Planning and policy (21)	7.86	7.71	-.148	1.42	.1575
Administrative and operational support (33)	4.40	6.66	-.226	2.17	.0324
$R^2 = .05$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .031$ $F\text{-test} = 2.609$ $p = .0786$ $N = 103$					

Table 5-10 reveals that ADMs in large departments are statistically distinguished from others by their higher average levels of interaction. The findings fail to support Proposition 1/Corollary 3 (The Size Effect) insofar as progressive increases in departmental size are not associated with increased levels of interaction. Presumably the uniqueness of the “large” departments’ high interaction frequencies with backbenchers is attributable to other factors that correlate with large department size. A closer analysis reveals that program delivery ADMs from the large natural resources departments (Agriculture, Environment, Energy) average almost 40 contacts a year with government backbenchers, and program delivery ADMs from the large human resource development departments (Advanced Education and Education) average slightly more than 30 interactions a year. Interaction rates among the dozen or so program ADMs from these departments reveal that certain officials do indeed relate frequently to government backbenchers. In the case of several of these departments a strong rural connection is assumed. However, ADMs are not distinguished when compared in the context of department functional cohorts ($F\text{-test} = 1.29$, $p = .2783$, adjusted $R\text{-squared value} = .011$). This is so even though natural resource and economic development departments average 22 contacts with backbenchers per annum, while ADMs from central agencies (the cohort that produced the lowest average) register only slightly over two annual contacts.

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The only difference between ADM cohorts in dealings with opposition MLAs is found when ADM job functions are controlled: program delivery ADMs are distinguished from administrative support ADMs (t-value = 2.31, $p = .0232$, adjusted R-squared value = .037)). This finding is added evidence that program delivery ADMs have higher levels of interaction with legislators than do administrative support ADMs, and provides additional support for Proposition 9, and its Corollary 3c

Table 5-10.—ADM Frequency of Interaction with Government Backbenchers Compared with Reference to Department Size

<i>Departmental Size Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Large-sized department (37)	24.03	-	-	-	-
Extra-large-sized department (30)	8.19	7.23	-.25	2.19	.0307
Medium-sized department (22)	6.36	8.26	-.24	2.14	.0348
Small-sized department (14)	4.93	9.52	-.22	2.01	.0475
$R^2 = .068$ Adj. $R^2 = .04$ F-test = 2.42 $p = .0707$ N = 103					

Most communications from MLAs arrive on an ADM's desk via the minister's or the deputy minister's office. Most Alberta ADMs seek to keep a respectable distance from government MLAs, and an even greater distance from opposition MLAs. That ADMs seek to maintain a distance is not surprising, as MLAs often approach them in efforts to gain advantages for their ridings:

ADM: You will find that you get pressure from MLAs saying this is what we want...and [you find yourself responding], "because your government has said that it doesn't want to do it..., because your government has said that you have got no money."

ECL: Do you find tension between the individual MLA, the MLA in the caucus setting, and the minister?

ADM: [I find a tension] between all the government and the Treasurer...and it is hard to explain [to the MLAs]. You say, "Look, they just cut my budget in half, how am I supposed to..., " [and the MLAs will say in conspiratorial appeal], "Yeah,

but ADM, this community really needs this." [I have to respond], "I know, but if we do it for this community then we have thirty-five waiting for it to be done, and I have no money to satisfy them." And...it is amazing because the MLAs are trying to satisfy their local [political constituencies] and the province [through the Treasurer] is saying that you have no money, and "chop, chop, chop." Guess who is in the middle of it?⁵²

Although few ADMs appear to cultivate MLAs actively, the case of regional executives at the third tier of the departmental administration may be different. ADMs interviewed reveal that in some cases regional officials may cultivate their local MLAs to establish mutually agreeable reciprocal relationships. With government MLAs advocating local interests within the party structure and regional administrators doing so within the bureaucratic machinery, there is a mutual intersection of interests.

5.3. ADM Interactions with Principal Actors of an Extragovernmental Liaison Network

Analysis in this section focuses on three sets of actors: private citizens, CEOs and managers of private firms, and interest associations and groups. Of these, relations with private citizens are investigated only in passing, as they were not a focus of interview inquiries. ADM interactions with corporate officials also receive relatively brief treatment, since these key actors were not the focus of interview questions, although a number of officials mentioned their relations with business persons. Interactions with interest groups receive detailed examination owing to the importance ADMs ascribe to these relationships and the emphasis given in the literature to relationships between bureaucrats and interest groups.

Private Citizens

Alberta ADMs frequently interact with private citizens, averaging 173 contacts a year. Program delivery ADMs are especially active, averaging 281 contacts per year (see

⁵² Official 332, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 10 April 1991.

table 5-11). They are notably distinguished from their administrative and planning and policy colleagues, who average 88 and 62 contacts per annum, respectively. Program delivery officials' notably higher interactions with private citizens support Proposition 9/Corollary 3c, that these managers are distinguished from their peers in constituent interactions. This also tends to verify Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions).

Table 5-11.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Annual Interactions with Private Citizens

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Program delivery (49)	280.84	-	-	-	-
Planning and policy (22)	62.91	75.42	-.29	2.89	.0047
Administrative and operational support (33)	87.55	66.18	-.29	2.92	.0043
R ² = .11 Adj. R ² = .092 F-test = 6.237 p = .0028 N = 104					

Analysis not shown in tabular form reveals that program delivery ADMs within natural resource and economic development departments register the highest level of contacts with private citizens ($\mu = 243.68$). However, the same test does not distinguish these senior officials from other departmental cohorts (F-test = 1.179, $p = .3216$, adjusted R-squared value = .005). Although some ADMs are isolated from the citizenry, the levels of citizen contact in some departments are very high. This is the case among program delivery ADMs reporting from the departments of Agriculture, Economic Development, Transportation, and Municipal Affairs. Departmental size also is not associated with differences in interactions between ADMs and private citizens (F-test = 1.179, $p = .3216$, adjusted R-squared value = .005).

Findings pertaining to department size and department function fail to support Proposition 1/Corollary 3 and Proposition 1/Corollary 6. At the same time, there is little

doubt that, unlike administrative and planning ADMS, program delivery ADMs are responsible for dealing with the citizenry.

Interest Group Relationships

(a) Selected Statistical Findings

Program delivery and administrative support ADMs are strongly distinguished from one another in their contacts with association and interest group representatives—see table 5-12. Planning and policy ADMs do not differ from program delivery ADMs, but are weakly distinguished from their administrative colleagues (t -value = 1.8, p = .0748).

Table 5-12.—ADM Job Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Annual Interactions with Associations and Interest Groups

<i>Job Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Program delivery (49)	106.06	-	-	-	-
Planning and policy (22)	75.14	29.59	-.11	1.04	.2985
Administrative and operational support (33)	18.00	25.97	-.34	3.39	.0010
$R^2 = .1$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .08$ $F\text{-test} = 5.76$ $p = .0043$ $N = 104$					

The statistical differences among the job function cohorts support Proposition 9 (Job Function Distinctions) and related Corollary 3c, which suggests program delivery ADMs are the most attentive in managing constituent relationships, and Corollary 4, which argues that program managers communicate more readily with extragovernmental actors than do support staff managers. With these findings sufficient evidence is accrued to venture that program delivery ADMs are distinguished from their administrative support peers in a general orientation toward extra-organizational constituents (Proposition 5/Corollary 5). However, the same cannot be said about program delivery

ADMs and their planning colleagues, since they do not differ from the program delivery cohort. This is also the case in the comparisons between the planning cohort and the administrative and operational support group in matters concerning extra-organizational liaison.

ADMs are not differentiated by departmental size in their interactions with interest groups, but there is a major cleavage between department functional cohorts—see table 5-13. With the natural resource and economic development ADMs differing from the public works and central agency contingents, Proposition 1/Corollary 6 (The Effect of Departmental Function) is supported.

As might be expected, program delivery ADMs in the natural resource and economic development departments are actively involved with interest groups and associations, averaging 147 contacts a year. Put another way, these officials meet almost three times a week with interest group and association representatives. This frequency of interaction stands in contrast to that of administrative and operational support ADMs in the human resources departments, and planning and policy ADMs in the public works and central agency departments who average less than ten contacts yearly.

Table 5-13.—ADM Department Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Annual Interactions with Associations or Interest Groups

<i>Departmental Functional Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p .</i>
Conservation, development, and promotion of physical resources (28)	104.46	-	-	-	-
Public security and external affairs (18)	78.67	29.71	-.10	.87	.3876
Protection and development of human resources (37)	74.61	35.84	-.10	.86	.3914
Public works, communication, and transportation (12)	14.16	40.93	-.24	2.21	.0297
Coordination of government (9)	12.85	45.46	-.22	2.02	.0459
<hr/>					
$R^2 = .07$	Adj. $R^2 = .03$	F-test = 1.83	$p = .1287$	N = 104	

It is not difficult to analyze relations between interest groups and program delivery ADMs, as these officials are natural candidates for intensive interaction with associations and organized interests. By the same token, the low level of interactions among administrative support ADMs is understandable given what is known of their orientations and the key components of their jobs, i.e., these officials are oriented "inward." The propensity for natural resource and economic development program delivery ADMs and human resource program delivery ADMs ($\mu = 102$ per annum) and their public security and external relations cohort counterparts ($\mu = 97$ per annum) to vigorously engage interest groups and associations is an indication of active interest-group-departmental relationships.

(b) ADM-Interest Group Relations and Evidence of Network Types

What is not clear from the statistical data is the character of ADM-interest group relationships. The "images" of bureaucratic policy roles and characterizations of various role foci developed by Aberbach et al. show that different types of relationships exist between administrators and organized interests. The point is made in Proposition 6/Corollary 4 (Principal Policy Role Foci). Recent work on Canadian public policy expands on this proposition and suggests that there is a relationship between types of policy networks and bureaucratic behaviour within them. This point is touched upon in Proposition 1/Corollary 5 (Effects of Policy Community Environment), which makes the presumption that different administrative behaviours are evinced in different policy community environments.

Coleman and Skogstad define six different types of policy networks which fall into three general groupings: open, closed, and state-directed.⁵³ Figure 5-1 summarizes the characteristics of the six networks. Evert Lindquist uses Coleman and Skogstad's typology as a basis for speculating on types of administrative behaviour manifest within the policy networks.⁵⁴ In figure 5-1 Lindquist's principal behaviours (or "modalities" as they are labeled) are juxtaposed with Coleman and Skogstad's network types. Aberbach et al.'s listing of predominant official role foci is also included. Figure 5-1 reveals Lindquist's essential point that bureaucratic behaviour is contingent on the policy setting within which officials operate. Lindquist's matching of behaviour and policy network types is speculative, but seems to be intuitively correct.

The following section does not seek to show that certain types of relationships exist within certain types of policy network setting. That is, proof of Proposition 1/Corollary 5 (Effects of Policy Community Environment) is not ventured. Instead, a sense of proportion relating to the type of policy contexts within which ADMs operate is sought. Information on ways in which ADMs relate to interest group actors is also examined, as this adds to an understanding of ADM role behaviour, and gives additional insight into Proposition 6/Corollary 4 (Principal Policy Role Foci).

⁵³ See William D. Coleman and Grace Skogstad, "Policy Communities and Policy Networks: Chapter One," in *Policy Communities and Public Policy in Canada*, ed. William D. Coleman and Grace Skogstad (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991), 14-31.

⁵⁴ See Evert Lindquist, "Public Managers and Policy Communities: Learning to Meet New Challenges," *Canadian Public Administration* 5, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 127-59.

Figure 5-1.—Extragovernmental Policy Network Types and Companion Characteristics

<i>Network Type</i>	<i>Coleman and Skogstad: Principal Policy Network Membership and Character</i>	<i>Lindquist: Principal Modality of Interaction in Policy Formulation</i>	<i>Aberbach et al.: Predominant ADM Role Focus</i>
<i>(1) Open</i>			
Pressure-pluralist	multiple interest groups actively competing with one another and engaging bureaucracy in efforts to influence policy and acquire public resources	information exchange, consultation	broker-policymaker-trustee-legalist (Image III)
Clientele-pluralist	a discrete number of favoured interest groups mildly competing with one another to the exclusion of less-favoured groups	consultation, negotiation and planning	broker-policymaker-trustee-legalist (Image III)
Parentela-pluralist	a discrete number of favoured interest groups receiving government largesse; competition presumably found in the politics of disbursement	negotiation and planning, consultation	advocate-partisan-ombudsman-facilitator (Image IV)
<i>(2) Closed</i>			
Concertation	single interest group or discrete number existing within closed policy network; competition largely absent	negotiation and planning	policymaker-trustee-legalist (Image III)
Corporatist	peak organization(s) within closed policy network; active competition between interest organizations with bureaucracy in neutral role	arbitration	legalist-trustee-ombudsman (Image III)
<i>(3) State-directed</i>			
State-directed	state-reified policy networks with state-dominated interest groups; level of competition determined by bureaucracy	unspecified	policymaker-trustee-legalist (Image II)

It appears that most Alberta ADMs operate within pressure-pluralist, clientele-pluralist networks. Second, there is little evidence of corporatist and parentela-pluralist

networks.⁵⁵ Finally, the reason few state-directed networks are found is the chameleon-like character of state-directed networks.

Pressure-pluralist networks appear to be the most prevalent of all. Coleman and Skogstad describe these networks as ones in which pressure groups assume a policy advocacy role and state agencies remain autonomous. This relationship is the one that most closely conforms to traditional interest group pluralism. According to Lindquist, government managers engage organized interests in information exchanges and consultation but do not engage them as partners in negotiations and in planning government activity.

A good example of the type of relationship that Lindquist writes about is found in relations between the Department of Recreation and its constituent interest groups. The Department of Recreation actively consults with a variety of organized interests while at the same time reserving the right to act unilaterally. Remaining apart from organized interests is particularly evident in regulatory and grants administration matters, although there is evidence of some consultation. A sense of the nature of interactions in this pluralist policy network is provided by an official:

The [interest groups] are in the loop in a general sense, for sure in the sense that minister, deputy, and ADMs meet at least annually in convention with the municipal recreation people, and [obtain] excellent two- or three-day feedback on

⁵⁵ Parentela-pluralist networks are said to arise "when organized interests gain a dominant place within a governing political party that, in turn, has members in prominent bureaucratic positions." There are considerable similarities between this *parentela* [sic.] arrangement and the LaPalombarian *parantela* mode described by Guy Peters. In both instances the linkages between the interest group and the bureaucracy are "indirect," with the political party interceding in bureaucratic policy making on behalf of the interest group—including bureaucratic staffing decisions. Coleman and Skogstad comment that state authority is diffused in parentela-pluralist arrangements to party/state officials who operate at the regional level. It is not clear whether by this they mean that such arrangements are evident in the federal government's regionalized operations, but not at the centre—evoking shades of the old "inside" and "outside" public services—or whether they write of provincial governments. It seems that by regional they mean provincial inasmuch as the conditions which they cite as being "rather conducive to parentela pluralism" involve a coincidence of one-party dominance and dependence on only one or two industries. In Canada such conditions are found in recent years at the provincial level and, as they approvingly reference Richards and Pratt's *Prairie Capitalism*, it would seem that Coleman and Skogstad believe them to exist in Alberta. See Coleman and Skogstad, "Policy Communities and Policy Networks," 27.

everything that is going on. We attend municipal [conventions] so that we get the general feedback. On a specific basis...I meet three or four times a year with the president of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association and the Facilities Association. On a week-to-week basis if there [are] issues they want to talk about they will phone me. If there is feedback that we [the department] want to give them we will phone them. On a specific issue—for example, right now we are doing a major response to the federal drug strategy [arising out of the Dubin inquiry]—we [might call] a working group of sport association presidents to get their feedback so that we can put it in our position paper to the federal government.

So on a specific and a generalized basis there is pretty good feedback. But frankly, we rely on our field consultants who are in touch on a day-to-day basis with sporting and recreation issues [for a great deal of advice about what the field thinks]. So that, you know, on policy X we would not necessarily phone somebody on something that we have a pretty good feel about. But on a great big global thing like the renewal of community and recreation cultural grants, it has been a year-long process of inviting letters and things like that. So, yeah, I think that they are in the loop.⁵⁶

Departments in which officials spoke of similar relations include Culture, Family and Social Services, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Environment, Economic Development, and PWSS (Public Works, Supply and Services).

There are clearly differences in pressure-pluralist relationships, but generally ADMs describe interest group/actor behaviour in which they were involved as being solicitous, and their own behaviour as acting as broker-policymakers. There is a fair amount of formal and informal consultation with organized interests and in some cases exchanges are quite frequent. The departments of Recreation and Environment actively solicit input from associations and other organized interests when developing policy. Moreover, it appears that the ADM is expected to take a lead role in these activities.

In the situations described, officials claim that they are above the fray and function as trustees of the public interest. Undoubtedly, a major factor promoting this orientation is that officials are involved in allocating government largesse through grant programs and contract arrangements. In recent years, with the shrinkage of the provincial purse, the arbiter and overseer roles have become more intense. At the same time, despite

⁵⁶ Official 432, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 9 May 1991.

the political executive's efforts to stimulate public administrators to involve interest groups in "partnerships," many senior officials have become inured in response to interest group hyper-lobbying activity protesting against cuts and increased competition for shrinking government funds.

This bureaucratic positioning may be only an initial reaction to making tough budget decisions, for there is evidence of the emergence of new relationships and increased openness, if not a nascent partnership. The ADM's role as broker-trustee and trustee-legalist-ombudsman remains, but is melded with a desire to develop closer working relationships with external groups.

It is possible that this process of distancing and embracing anew is part of a general dynamic in which a shrinking treasury has weakened the capacity of departments operating within a state-directed/pressure-pluralist mode to sustain state direction through the control of largesse.⁵⁷ To use Coleman and Skogstad's logic, with the atrophy of the public treasury the level of government independence is lowered, which has increased pressure-pluralist dynamics while prompting departmental interest in pursuing cooperative strategies.⁵⁸ Hints of this are offered in an ADM commentary:

I think that we're in an interesting time right now [because] the government doesn't enjoy a lot of support in the urban centres, particularly in Edmonton, and therefore, they are very keen at looking at ways that they can endear themselves more to the population in the urban centres. So essentially the instruction is, talk to them, work with them, let's listen to them, let's hear what they have to say. That, then, in my role, gives me the opportunity to meet and work with and discuss and dialogue with [many interest groups].⁵⁹

Interviews suggest that clientele-pluralist networks exist between agency and external interests in Municipal Affairs, Agriculture, Health, Transportation and Utilities,

⁵⁷ Coleman and Skogstad, "Conclusion," on network change, in the authors' *Policy Communities and Public Policy in Canada*, 323ff.

⁵⁸ See Lindquist, "Public Managers and Policy Communities," chart 2, p. 135.

⁵⁹ Official 210, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 16 May 1991.

Energy, Occupational Health, and the Department of Forestry, Lands and Natural Resources. Departmental officials report dealing with interest groups which are either the single representational group or one of a few representational groups in a policy network. ADMs report that they often develop close working relationships with the elected officers, senior executive management, and staff of interest organizations in the municipal and educational sectors, as well as the producer associations in the agriculture, transportation, forestry, and energy sectors. In contrast to relationships between government and interest group organizations within pressure-pluralist networks, those in clientele-pluralist networks are more institutionalized. The tenor of a clientele-pluralist network is illustrated by an official from a small natural resource development department:

ECL: Do you find yourself working down in the bowels of these interest group organizations, participating in their working committees, working with them, or do you find it proper and desirable to work at arms' length from them?

ADM: At one time, we stayed above and apart from them. More recently we've tried very much to get involved as much as those organizations are ready to allow. We have a long way to go before some of these groups will be comfortable with government people participating directly in their discussions].... The UPTFOS [Upstream Petroleum Industry Task Force on Safety] is an example of where government did work very closely with industrial committees. I chaired a committee, for example, that developed the audit process that the petroleum industry is in the process of adopting for use within the industry itself. And almost all the committees were joint committees in that process. In some cases government takes a very active role....⁶⁰

Pross comments on the consequences of clientele-pluralist arrangements—the civility of the discourse and a concern on the part of the interest groups not to lose their privileged positions.⁶¹ Relationships between departments and interest groups appear to be civil and constructive. ADMs are active agents in promoting to pressure groups the

⁶⁰ Official 157, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 6 April 1991.

⁶¹ See Pross, *Group Politics*, 144–49, for a discussion of the imperative for members of the subgovernment to cooperate.

interests of the government and the department and in making representations on behalf of the policy network to the department executive and other departments. Although there is evidence that some officials find it difficult to distinguish between the department and sector interests and are "captured" (i.e., they become the "fixers" discussed in chapter 3), most government agents are clear about their role in defending department and government interests. This appears to be the case even when an official is aggressively promoting an industry or sector cause.

The Alberta Municipal Affairs ADM's effort to bring self-government to improvement districts, which is described in chapter 4, provides a good example of ADM activity within a state-directed policy network. In this instance the ADM's efforts were bent toward the reification of a policy community by vivifying an organization to represent the interests of the improvement districts to the government. Another ADM is involved in a similar process in the labour safety standards area. With the government seeking to place the burden of defining standards and performing inspections on employers and organized labour,⁶² it falls to the ADM to see that the project succeeds. The ADM shouldering responsibility for this initiative speaks of having to fashion an interest community so that consultations can occur and a self-governing policy community can evolve:

It is certainly one of the most difficult exercises we have ever tried to run...we simply did not know who they were. We started out with a mailing list of about two hundred and fifty, and we are now up to fifty-seven hundred and growing. We are still stumbling on important groups and groups...everyone touches on safety. For example, it was only a year and a half ago that we discovered the Alberta Society of Engineering Technologists, who quietly have their office downtown and have a membership of something like fifteen thousand engineering technicians! They permeate the whole safety system. Here we are two and a half years into the process

⁶² See Alberta Labour, "Alberta Safety Codes Act: Questions and Answers," September 1992. Also see the short, undated paper, "Toward a New System of Public Safety: A Safety Codes Act Transition Paper," produced by Alberta Labour Communications, Edmonton, Alberta.

and we are still discovering groups like that. We hope we have found all the big ones by now. But that made it very difficult.⁶³

One can speculate why only fragmentary evidence is found of parentela-pluralist relationships on the Canadian political scene.⁶⁴ Three reasons might explain their absence. First, it is possible that the lack of patronage abuse and the good government tradition of Alberta public administration precluded the development of parentela-pluralist networks, which are ultimately patronage relationships. Second, where the networks exist, it may be that few officials are willing to comment on their existence. Finally, the evidence necessary to identify parentela networks is more exacting than that required to establish the existence of other network types, since they are a form of clientele-pluralist networks which are defined by a politics of distribution rather than redistribution. The determining factor is the *intent* in directing government resources to external interests and, thus, discovery of parentela-pluralist networks turns on establishing intent. This study does not focus on the type of evidence necessary to establish the "intent" underpinning parentela-pluralist networks.⁶⁵

An example of a corporatist policy network is found in accounts offered by a Health Department ADM who describes his department's efforts to bring medical service principal suppliers together to resolve policy disputes. One interviewee spoke of the similarities between the atmosphere and dynamics of these interactions and those of the formal arbitration of industrial disputes with which he was familiar. A second example

⁶³ Official 312, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 14 May 1991.

⁶⁴ Coleman and Skogstad, "Conclusion," in the authors' *Policy Communities and Public Policy in Canada*, 318.

⁶⁵ Coleman and Skogstad suggest that there is a higher likelihood that parentela-pluralist relationships will exist at the provincial level and go so far as to propose that Alberta is one of the more likely provinces within which such an arrangement would be found. See Coleman and Skogstad, "Policy Communities and Policy Networks," 27.

might be the previously discussed industry safety standards council envisioned by the Department of Labour.

If examples of corporatist relationships are scarce, it is the opposite for concertation arrangements, which are described by Coleman and Skogstad in the following terms:

[Concertation relationships are those] in which a single association represents a sector and participates with a corresponding state agency in the formulation and implementation of policy. The state agency has considerable capacity in its own right, being autonomous and able to concentrate power for coordinated decision-making. Sectoral interests match the state's strength by drawing on an inclusive, hierarchical associational system capable of engaging in longer term policy deliberations while maintaining member support.⁶⁶

There are many examples of ADM descriptions of concertation networks, but one from an Alberta Municipal Affairs ADM is particularly telling:

ADM: A large part of my job is involved with relationships with the AUMA [Alberta Urban Municipalities Association] and the AAMD&C [Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties]. It involves talking to them, to the executive directors, two or three times a week in the normal course of events. It depends on this, that, or the other thing and, depending on who the minister is, you might also be talking with the president [of the association]. Our current minister is very good about keeping in touch with the president himself...

ECL: What are some of the venues and some of the circumstances in which you find yourself formally relating to these groups?

ADM: Well, certainly at their annual conventions and we're in full-time attendance. We spend a lot of the time outside the conference session itself, where we meet with the municipalities.... I brought with me to the position, to this ADM position, the job of what is known as being the honorary secretary of the AUMA, and I continued it when I came into provincial service. That was something that they had when I worked for the City of Edmonton. Now, the honorary secretary is entitled to attend board meetings. You don't vote, but attend board meetings and speak at them and all that sort of thing. And I've just carried on doing that. And I changed to this position and I think that's sort of unique in the country that there's somebody from the department who's a regular attendee at a board meeting and a participant. I don't have a regular continuing appointment...with the rural group but frequently, we'll go and meet with the executive committee of the group and talk about legislation that is proposed.... We run over the legislation and get their comments on...some new program deal. I might be over there doing that or we may go at their request to discuss some issue or problem they have in the relationship with the government

⁶⁶ Ibid., 28.

where they want our assistance. It might have to do with our department or it might have to do with anything in the government.

ECL: And so you are...very much on call with the groups.

ADM: Yes.

ECL: And vice versa, for that matter.

ADM: Yes.⁶⁷

Another example of this kind of arrangement is offered by an official who provides insight into the complexity of the ADM's role when dealing in network contexts:

ADM: Well, in my position one of the primary contacts I have is with our construction contracting industry—the industry client that does our work. We have an ongoing relationship with them. The Alberta Road Builders—I would call them primary because they deliver our roads and bridges. Another important group is the Consulting Engineers of Alberta. Contact with the CEA is important for two reasons.... First, for the business they do for the department, and second, if we were to be privatized they would be the people who would take over the business. They are both friend and foe, I suppose, so you have to have an ongoing relationship with them....

ECL: With respect to the outside interest groups, or outside agencies, you were the primary official, as the ADM, who was working with these groups....

ADM: Yes, yes...they'd meet with the deputy as well, but I was the primary contact with the Alberta Road Builders and the Consulting Engineers of Alberta.

ECL: Give me some sense of the character of interactions you have with these two interest group organizations.

ADM: Well, let me speak about the Consulting Engineers first because they're the toughest group...they're not entirely organized...I work with them both individually and with their organization as regards policy for providing them with some of our work. As an organized group, as the Consulting Engineers of Alberta, I suppose I contract them quarterly, with one general meeting annually which is very formal and where decisions are written down and so on.

Now, with the Alberta Road Builders, again it's a similar thing in that I deal individually with many of their members as regards contracts that they were giving out in our department. Normally we met about monthly with the formal Alberta Road Builders group.

⁶⁷ Official 331, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 14 May 1991.

ECL: That was an executive group.

ADM: Yes, an executive group. It was a large executive group representing all the different facets of the contracting industry. I'd meet with them roughly monthly.

ECL: Right. Did you have a formal seat on their organization or are you the "other guy"?

ADM: Oh, no, no. We aren't members of the organization; we are the "other guy," right.

ECL: And what is their function? What is the role of these formal organizations and what is your role in relation to them during these various encounters?

ADM: Well, I think their role was to act as general spokesman for all of the road builders—apparently about 95% of road builders in Alberta belong to that group so they have a very high membership. Their role was to seek certain policy change from us as regards to the contracting business we were in, that is, changes to specifications, changes to the general specifications in contracts, changes in the way we administered contracts. That type of thing.

ECL: Would it be fair to say that this, the road builders' group, specifically, was created as a lobby or interest group to be directed towards your department specifically?

ADM: I think, by and large, that's how it developed, yes. It has gone on from that to be a voice for the industry in any matter, not necessarily technical contracting methods, but labour law, that kind of the thing. So in more recent years they will lobby not only our department, but also any other department, or even the federal government over taxation. Whatever is of interest to the membership. So, yes [the organization] is a lobby.

ECL: You have a very interesting relationship with this organization. On the one hand you have to be delicate, on the other hand you often have to be a bearer of bad news.

ADM: That's true. And yet perhaps one of the most important interesting parts of the job, I found, is walking that thin line. It's very challenging.⁶⁸

A feature of the ADM's role in concertation policy network relationships is striking a balance between a partnership role and that of upholding the public interest. While this occurs in all bureaucrat-external-group relationships where the government is seeking to sustain a positive working relationship, within concertation arrangements it seems to be especially taxing. This is because there is no competition of external interests

⁶⁸ Official 492, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 10 June 1991.

that might mitigate an especially close government/interest relationship. This point is underscored by a senior official in one of the natural resource ministries:

An important point to realize is that in many social issues government manages, there are two sides to the issue that are represented by sectors in the public. Environmental protection... is a good example. There is the pro-development lobby and its opposition represented by environment activists. Government can hold public hearings and it can hold meetings of all sorts, it can conduct polls in order to sense where the high-wire balancing point is between the two. However, in our game, nobody is ever on the non-development side when it comes to discussing our relating with the oil industry. [I will concede to you that] on environmental issues, yes, there is opposition—we have a lot of issues there, particularly in the last five years—but as for the government's relationship with the oil industry in terms of getting revenue, and in terms of the terms and conditions of leases and all that sort of thing, the ability of the industry to do its job, there is [really no organized opposition].... We in government are the guardians of the public interest. And this means we are not doing a balancing act here. We are striving to ascertain where the public interest lies and then we deal with the industry that is our client industry. So you had to get down to brass tacks with the people in the industry. It isn't like conducting a CRTC hearing or a even one of Keith Spicer's [constitutional consultation] things...he doesn't see those people again. He is just going across the country sampling public opinion. We *are* going to see those people again...we have business to do with those people on a continuing basis on specific matters as well as a policy affecting the industry as a whole. You have to get over the hump with them of them thinking that you are a monolithic bureaucrat who is out to shaft them for all you can. You have to build up a sense of confidence with them and that takes time.⁶⁹

Among the departments where concertation policy networks appear to exist are Municipal Affairs, Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, Energy, Health, Education, and Transportation and Utilities.

In summary, while more extensive research is required to identify the character of Alberta policy networks, it seems that all of the policy network types identified by Coleman and Skogstad exist. The most prevalent appear to be pressure-pluralist, clientele-pluralist and concertation networks. Little evidence is found of corporatist networks. Parentela-pluralist policy relations appear to be rare, but this may be because they are difficult to identify. It seems that where parentela-pluralist styled relationships

⁶⁹ Official 157, interview by author, Tape recording, Edmonton, Alberta, 6 April 1991.

exist they are less focused on policy matters than on the disbursement of government resources. That is, being as they are related to old-fashioned patronage, officials are less than open and frank.

Only tentative conclusions can be drawn about the association between policy networks and departmental function. Institutionalized interests found within the public health system, municipalities, school authorities, and other major state-sponsored initiatives (e.g., highway construction) tend to relate to government in either clientelist or concertationist systems in which consultation, negotiation, and planning are evident.⁷⁰ The same also appears to be true for relations with interest groups in the province's oil and gas, agriculture, and forestry sectors.⁷¹

These conclusions are loosely tied to findings of table 5-13 to the extent that evidence of clientelist and concertationist behaviour is concentrated in the economic development and natural resource departments. The high levels of interaction with interest group and association representatives may reflect the tight relationships that exist between state and interest group agents when operating within clientelist and concertationist situations. ADMs in human resource departments such as Health and Education and an external relations department such as Municipal Affairs also report considerable negotiation and information-sharing activity with interest groups. Interviews with some of these ADMs also suggest there are clientist and concertation styled relationships. However, this evidence is not strong enough to suggest that ADMs operating in pressure-pluralist and state-directed arrangements have lower levels of interaction with interest group and association representatives.

⁷⁰ B. Guy Peters makes this point when speaking about institutionalized interest groups in his *The Politics of Bureaucracy* (New York: Longman, 1984), 155-56.

⁷¹ Tourism might be added to this list but the evidence is much less clear. The tourist industry is not nearly as well represented by strong and well-organized associations as the others.

A number of departments have been named as being associated with one type of network or another. It is worth noting that a department is often involved in a variety of network relationships. An ADM can operate within several policy networks that are distinguished by quite different interactions. What is important is that ADMs' role foci can differ significantly at any given moment, depending on the network within which they find themselves.

Despite these vagaries, the discussion of different types of sectoral relationships suggests that within the general ADM cohort there is a range of policy role types that correspond to the Comparative Elite Project archetypes (Proposition 6/Corollary 4: Principal Policy Role Foci). Image III types appear to be the most prevalent. Assuming this is the case, then the Proposition 6/Corollary 4 (Principal Policy Role Foci) supposition that Images I and II are more prevalent than Images III or IV appears to be dubious. While the evidence points to the predominance of Image III types, it could be that these officials appear most evident simply because they are the ones who engaged the researcher in conversation concerning active external relationships.

Another reason for the apparent dominance of this image is found in figure 5-1, in which most relationships are correlated with Image III characteristics. While one may disagree with the classifications, the predominance of the Image III notion should not be surprising inasmuch as Image I and Image II bureaucrats are most likely to be system-oriented officials who do not have extensive external relationships.

Image II types are best described as technocrats, who operate, in Victor Thompson's term, "without sympathy or enthusiasm."⁷² They act as legalists and trustees and seem to be found in the state-directed policy networks and within central agencies where they act as guardians of the government's resources. With the economic restraint

⁷² See Victor A. Thompson, *Without Sympathy or Enthusiasm: The Problem of Administrative Compassion* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1975).

of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, some ADMs appear to have adopted this mode. Perhaps they feel it protects them against outraged external interest group actors who have lost government funding, or perhaps this is the expected behaviour when allocation decisions involve severe rationing of available funds.

Perhaps the reason there is little evidence of Image I bureaucrats is because Aberbach and his colleagues did not seriously develop the construct as a real-world prospect.⁷³ However, some officials interviewed spoke of their roles in such terms, insisting that politicians set policy and that they carried it out. It is possible, though not probable, that some ADMs working in administrative and operational roles relate to the political world only in terms of technical administrative activity. However, few if any ADMs believe that it is not relevant for them to develop insights into the views of the minister and assess the long-range direction of government policy in their areas of responsibility.⁷⁴ This suggests, although it certainly is not positive proof, that few ADMs operated in the robotic "I only follow orders" mode implied in Image I.

Finally, there is evidence of the existence of an Image IV, the superbureaucrat, or an active agent promoting Tory policy. Officials did not admit to operating in this role, although a few pointed to officials in the economic development departments as being representative of this type of bureaucrat. However, the enthusiasm with which some ADMs have adopted the government's prescription for downsizing their divisions, and the vigour that they bring to this business, could be an indication of Image IV orientations. If so, the delineation of Image IV requires slight amendment, as it is used in the literature to describe officials who aid the central authorities in implementing

⁷³ Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians*, 4.

⁷⁴ Consider: VAR070, *assess the long-range direction of governmental policy in my area of responsibility*, $\mu = 4.40$; VAR076, *develop insight into the views and direction of the minister*, $\mu = 4.42$.

programs. Officials acting in the Image IV mode during the 1990s are more likely to be involved in dismantling programs.

Proposition 1/Corollary 5 (Effects of Policy Community Environment) is tentatively supported by findings in this section. Different patterns of interaction do indeed appear to be determined by the ecology of relationships. Since the ecology of these relationships is obviously subject to change, it is clear that ADMs must be adaptive. Some appear to be highly so—yesterday's builders are often today's wreckers.

Private Firms

Atkinson and Coleman observe that in Canada working relationships between bureaucrats and officers of private firms can be very close.⁷⁵ Bennett and McPhail's recent work finds that private companies are consistently rated among the most important policy system actors across three discrete stages of the policy process.⁷⁶ Private companies ranked fifth in importance in the agenda-setting and policy selection stages and second only to respondents' ministers in the policy implementation stage. Neo-Marxist analysis suggests business and government are inter-related and employs the notion of a "power structure" for illustrative purposes.⁷⁷ Even neo-pluralist students of politics, such as Lindblom, write of special relationships existing between business and the state which are decidedly nonpluralist in character.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ See Michael M. Atkinson and William D. Coleman, "Bureaucrats and Politicians in Canada: An Examination of the Political Administration Model," *Comparative Political Studies* 18, no. 1 (June 1985), 58–80, and their more extensive treatment of bureaucratic and business interest relations in *The State, Business and Industrial Change in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989).

⁷⁶ Bennett and McPhail, "Policy Process Perceptions," 305.

⁷⁷ For a Marxist description, see Ralph Miliband's chapter, "The State System and the State Elite," in *The State in Capitalist Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1969), 49–67.

⁷⁸ See Martin J. Smith's discussion of neo-Marxist and neo-pluralist descriptions of state-interest group relations. Martin J. Smith, "Pluralism, Reformed Pluralism and Neo-pluralism: The Role of Pressure Groups in Policy-Making," *Political Studies* 38, no. 2 (1990): 302–22.

With the literature pointing to the prospect of ADM relations with business being important, it is assumed that they will have relations with external business representatives, particularly in the natural resource and economic development departments, which tend to be oriented toward the commerce sector. Alternatively, with a public service orientation, central agency ADMs would likely have the least amount of contact with business firms. These assumptions underlie Proposition 1/Corollary 6, which maintains there are differences in interactions with system actors based on departmental function.

Analysis of departmental cohort interactions with CEOs and private firm managers reveals that natural resource and economic development ADMs are, with one exception, significantly distinguished from other cohorts. These results are portrayed in tables 5-13 and 5-14. Clearly, then, the proposition that ADMs in resource and economic development departments differ in interaction with officials of private firms is borne out by the survey data.

It is found that central agency ADMs have higher frequencies of interaction with private firm managers than do public security and external affairs ADMs. Thus, the notion of the central agents' unique insularity in relation to external actors does not hold in all situations. A close look at the data suggests that one reason why central agency ADMs demonstrate relatively strong interactions with senior business persons is tied to their dealings involving the procurement of services and supplies. Moreover, Treasury officials appear to have active relations with business officials on tax and finance matters.

Table 5-14.—ADM Department Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Annual Interactions with CEOs of Private Firms

<i>Departmental Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Conservation, development, and promotion of physical resources (28)	177.11	-	-	-	-
Protection and development of human resources (37)	36.70	55.05	-.30	2.55	.0123
Public works, communication, and transportation (12)	22.17	75.83	-.22	2.04	.0437
Public security and external affairs (18)	13.83	66.40	-.27	2.46	.0157
Coordination of government (9)	10.78	84.22	-.21	1.98	.0510
$R^2 = .09$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .05$ $F\text{-test} = 2.47$ $p = .0497$ $N = 104$					

Table 5-15.—ADM Departmental Function Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Annual Interactions with Managers of Private Firms

<i>Departmental Function Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Conservation, development, and promotion of physical resources (28)	151.54	-	-	-	-
Public works, communication, and transportation (12)	38.67	55.05	-.22	2.05	.0430
Protection and development of human resources (37)	36.22	39.97	-.34	2.89	.0048
Coordination of government (9)	34.89	61.14	-.20	1.91	.0593
Public security and external affairs (18)	18.67	48.20	-.31	2.76	.0070
$R^2 = .10$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .07$ $F\text{-test} = 2.9$ $p = .0257$ $N = 104$					

The interviews provide a more complete picture of the nature of relationships occurring between ADMs and business representatives. First, it is evident that relationships with private enterprise occur in several different contexts involving different role orientations. ADMs relate to businesses as purchasers of private sector services to government as well as co-producers of services. ADMs also play a role with businesses

as their regulators and overseers. Finally, they are key business supporters, providing them services that include the development of Alberta industry and the promotion of Alberta products. The emphasis of bureaucrat-business relationships differs significantly across the government and within the same department, depending on the programs. However, it is within the natural resource and economic development departments that is found the fullest range of government activities with private sector organizations. Clientele-pluralist and corporatist arrangements are found in economic development and resources departments and, if anything, additional emphasis appears to have been placed on developing these during the period of the Getty premiership. An unfortunate example of this is found in the NovAtel debacle, wherein the provincial government invested and lost millions of dollars in guaranteed loans in an effort to establish an Alberta-based cellular telephone firm.⁷⁹ It is clear that the Alberta government is sympathetic to business.

The continuing absence of a sales tax is partially explained by the government's desire to create a favourable climate for small and large businesses alike.⁸⁰ There is a virtual absence of an anti-business faction in the Legislative Assembly. This is not to suggest there is no conflict between business and government, but rather to characterize

⁷⁹ Alberta Legislature, *Report of the Auditor General on NovAtel Communications Ltd.*, 1992.

⁸⁰ Statistics provided by the Canada West Foundation detailing 1991 provincial tax rates reveal that Alberta's basic personal income tax rate is the lowest in the country (46.5%), next to Quebec it has the lowest small business rate, and along with British Columbia it has the lowest capital tax. Moreover, along with Manitoba, its gasoline tax is the lowest in the country. This said, the province has recently added a high income surtax (8.0 percent) and has also added a flat rate tax on top of this of 0.5 percent. The latter phenomenon is evidenced only on the prairies. Alberta has no payroll tax. See *Canada West Factfinder 1992* (Calgary: The Canada West Foundation, 1991), 32. Irene Ip comments: "From generally insignificant levels and shares of GDP in the 1960s, transfers to business became a more and more important budgetary item in the 1970s in all the provinces, particularly Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. On a percentage of GDP and on a per capita basis, Alberta and Saskatchewan were the biggest spenders on subsidies to and assistance for capital investment by business in the 1980s.... They also had a very large increase since the mid-1970s." See *Big Spenders: A Survey of Provincial Government Finances in Canada* (Toronto: C.D. Howe Institute, 1991), 169-70.

the relationships as positive. As might be expected, critics of this pro-business posture complain that it does not always benefit the public interest.⁸¹

Higher levels of the bureaucracy tend to interact directly with senior officials of larger private firms. More than one ADM mentioned that ADM contacts were often with corporate officials at the vice-presidential level, while deputy ministers and ministers have contacts with CEOs. Clearly, business representatives are able to obtain access to government officials. If this is unsuccessful, ministers and MLAs are reputed to be highly responsive to business representation.

Table 5-16.—ADM Departmental Size Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Annual Interactions with CEOs

<i>Departmental Size Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Medium-sized department (22)	181.77	-	-	-	-
Large-sized department (31)	42.94	61.613	-.282	2.253	.0264
Extra-large-sized department (37)	34.68	75.562	-.242	2.107	.0376
Small-sized department (14)	22.57	59.503	-.313	2.472	.0151
R ² = .071 Adj. R ² = .043 F-test = 2.552 p = .0598 N = 103					

Comparisons of ADMs' interaction frequencies with CEOs and managers by job function cohorts produce no significant statistical distinctions.⁸² The failure to differentiate job function cohorts occurs despite substantial differences in cohort interaction averages. Proposition 9 is not sustained. Program delivery ADMs average 116

⁸¹ This kind of criticism is not found within the public service.

⁸² The nearest thing to a statistically significant result comes when program delivery and administrative ADMs are regressed on one another (t-value = .582, p. = .0627, adjusted R-squared value = .073).

yearly interactions with CEOs, while the average for policy ADMs is 26, and that for their administrative peers is 22.

Table 5-17.—ADM Departmental Size Cohorts Compared on Frequency of Annual Interactions with Managers of Private Firms

<i>Departmental Size Cohort (cohort N)</i>	<i>Cohort Mean</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>Std. Coeff.</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p.</i>
Medium-sized department (22)	129.00	-	-	-	-
Large-sized department (31)	79.32	45.308	-.138	1.096	.2755
Small-sized department (14)	45.00	55.565	-.174	1.512	.1338
Extra-large-sized department (37)	20.81	43.757	-.315	2.473	.0151
$R^2 = .062$ $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .034$ $F\text{-test} = 2.199$ $p = .0928$ $N = 103$					

Notable differences in the propensity to engage CEOs are associated with departmental size cohorts. When ADMs are compared in terms of their relations with CEOs, it is the medium-sized departmental cohort that differs. The difference is less pronounced when size cohorts are compared on interactions with private sector managers, although ADMs in medium-sized departments register the highest interaction averages. These findings do not support the size effect corollary (Proposition 1/Corollary 3), as increased contracts are not associated with increases in departmental size. The distinction is likely associated with the nature of the activity within the departments comprising the medium-sized cohort. Among these are the departments of Career Development and Employment, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Economic Development, and Labour.

5.4. Summary and Conclusions

Departmental size is associated with the frequency with which ADMs relate to certain actors. ADMs in small departments interact with their deputies more frequently than colleagues in larger departments. The high frequency of interaction between ADMs

and deputies of small departments is logical, as small departments provide an environment for greater professional intimacy. ADMs in medium-sized departments interact most frequently with the minister's office, and they and ADMs in the small-sized department cohort are statistically distinguished from ADMs in the larger departments on this count. Presumably the smaller size of these departments promotes more frequent interactions, although it is plausible that the functional focus of the departments also has a bearing on the frequency of interactions. ADMs in the small-sized department cohort are statistically distinguished from the large- and extra-large-sized department cohorts by their high frequencies of interaction with peers in other departments. They are not distinguished from ADMs in medium-sized departments. In this instance it is difficult to understand how departmental size alone would contribute to this association. A more plausible explanation is that within the smaller department cohorts are departments that have coordination of government and ministry of state functions. ADMs in large departments are distinguished from peers in other departments in their relationships with governmental backbenchers. Again, department function instead of size appears to provide a better explanation of this relationship, as a number of the larger departments have important regional delivery components which would promote backbencher contacts.

Administrative and operational support ADMs relate with others at their same rank within a department with notably greater frequency than their program delivery and policy colleagues. This is predicted, as these officials are charged with managing the core administrative functions of the department and are often the "quartermasters" of their department's resources.

Evidence indicates that administrative ADMs are departmentally and administratively oriented and program delivery ADMs are externally oriented. Program delivery ADMs differ from their administrative and planning and policy peers in their

higher rates of interaction with the minister, interest groups, and associations. Moreover, they are also distinguished from their administrative and operational support colleagues by having more interactions with government backbenchers, opposition MLAs, and private citizens. These findings underscore the logical, internal-external difference between administrative and program delivery ADMs. It also points to what seems to be a greater "political" orientation of program delivery ADMs, who are more politically oriented inasmuch as they are more directly involved in relating to and managing relationships with interest associations, private citizens, and MLAs. Evidence in chapter 4 and this chapter suggests program delivery ADMs are more actively involved in managing relations with the minister, even though such relations are filtered through the deputy and the departmental executive committee.

Planning and policy ADMs do not differ from other ADMs in relations with system actors. An explanation is that planning and policy ADMs' jobs are less defined than those of their program delivery and administrative counterparts, and thus more subject to direction from deputies and ministers. Planning and policy ADMs appear to function in many instances as the heads of traditional *staff* organizations which operate in the service of the deputy.

The singularity of natural resource and economic development department high interaction frequencies with selected system actors is placed in sharper focus in this chapter. Mention has already been made of the higher frequency with which these ADMs relate to government backbenchers. Similarly, they are distinguished from other ADM departmental functional cohorts by the frequency with which they relate to their ministers, caucus committees, interest associations, and private sector executives and managers.

An important finding derived from the interviews is that the relations between deputies and ministers have considerable influence on the nature of interactions which

occur between ADMs and other actors. For example, a minister wanting to deal with departmental ADMs frequently will do so if the deputy is amenable. Alternatively, when a deputy takes a dim view of such relations, they will occur less frequently and their character will be different, although ministers tend to prevail in such circumstances. When a minister prefers dealing only with the deputy, ADMs are likely to have few ministerial interactions.

Ministers control access to other political members and along with deputies establish protocols and opportunities for ADMs to relate to MLAs. Still, program delivery ADMs have periodic contact with members of the Legislative Assembly during the normal course of their work. Depending on the nature of these interactions, they may choose to deal with political members directly or steer them to the deputy or minister. In other words, the actions taken depend on the particulars of the situation and on the preferences of the minister and the deputy and may vary significantly depending on the dynamics of the relationships between the two.

ADMs' relationships with the ministerial office, departmental peers, interest groups, business representatives, the general public, and upper level bureaucrats in other departments do not appear to be overly influenced by the preferences of the minister or deputy. Instead, the frequency, character, and importance of these relationships appear to be determined by the requirements of an ADM's job. The skill and energy that ADMs apply to the management of these relationships have considerable bearing on their success and may even affect the evolving character of the relationships.

Three points are stressed. First, just as a deputy minister's and minister's style is important to the relationships between them and ADMs, so too is the ADM's style an important determinant in the relationships which exist within a division and between the divisional entity and others. Second, the "commodity" of trust appears to be especially important in relationships which occur between ADMs and others, which is particularly

true ADM relationships with their deputy and the minister. The same can be said of peer relations. Indeed, the glue of the peer colleges examined in this study appears to be trust. Peer colleges comprise trusted others from whom ADMs acquire valued information. ADMs interviewed noted that trust is an important ingredient in successful relationships with interest groups and associations. In particular, developing and sustaining trust in corporatist and concertation arrangements appears to be essential to a successful relationship. This observation can be extended to clientele-pluralist relationships. Third, it is clear that although officials come into contact with many others while performing their duties, the most significant relationships are restricted to a small number of persons with whom close and sometimes lasting relationships develop. Managing at the ADM level involves personally dealing with "known" others. It is not surprising that style and trust weigh heavily in the conduct of affairs. Although a strong personal aspect may be found in all management, at the ADM level the capacity to deal diplomatically with all manner of people is especially important.

A number of protocols governing relationships between ADMs and other actors are mentioned in this chapter. The most formal relate to dealing with the political executive and politicians. In general, when communications are initiated by the minister, ADMs reply directly to the minister's office, but when communications to the minister are initiated by an ADM, they are routed through the deputy minister's office. Variations exist, but deputies, ministers, and ADMs usually favour this arrangement. Communications with other ministers tend to follow the same pattern. Protocols relating to members of the Legislative Assembly are less strictly defined when it comes to interactions with members of the government party. However, dealings with opposition member MLAs are highly circumspect.

The existence of scalar communication protocols within the bureaucracy deserves additional mention. The normal practice is for ADMs to contact their counterparts in

other divisions and departments if they wish to deal with officials at a lower rank. After "bases are touched," diagonal communications proceed uninhibited even though it is likely that the subordinates with whom ADMs deal report the particulars of the communications to their superiors. Relationships with corporate or government officials outside the public service also tend to be characterized by their scalar character. Significantly, ADMs are nominally the lowest level of the senior bureaucracy that the government puts forward to speak for the minister.

Little is said about the formality of relationships between ADMs and others beyond the discussion of protocols. Interactions tend to be work-a-day when not involving politicians or after bases are touched with departmental counterparts. These relationships are not necessarily informal, as officials frequently meet within the context of formal committees and working groups, and within these contexts formality is required. However, unlike relationships with politicians, there is little requirement to demonstrate a proper deference to office. Relationships with interest group representatives may also be formalized and enforced by both governmental and interest group actors concerned about maintaining proper distinctions between their policy process roles and vested interests. Government actors are more insistent on construing relationships in these terms, as there is a natural tendency for interest groups to ingratiate themselves with government officials. Nonetheless, particulars depend on circumstances, and the interview record reveals that ADMs occasionally seek to ingratiate themselves with interest groups and associations.

Finally, little can be said about the venues in which ADMs meet with other actors except to note that interactions occur in all manner of venues. Within departments, the most important locus of interaction for members of the administrative executive is the executive committee meeting. In most departments these committees are convened on a weekly basis and provide a venue in which the deputy and executive management share

information. In a number of departments important issues relating to departmental administration and policy initiatives are worked out in the executive committee. A few departments use it almost as a departmental "cabinet."

Administrators belong to a panoply of additional departmental and interdepartmental committees, of which most are ad hoc and are convened only to solve a particular problem. Others, such as the Natural Resources Advisory Committee and the controller's senior financial officers' committee, exist as institutionalized forums in which important administrative and policy matters are addressed.

Outside the Alberta public service, ADMs deal with external actors in a variety of situations. For those active in intergovernmental matters, prominent venues include a variety of intergovernmental committees in which senior administrators frequently meet. These range from ministerial conferences to working committees established between governments.

Interest group and "stakeholder" liaisons occur in many settings. Corporate and interest group representatives appear regularly at ADM offices. ADMs attend associational and organizational meetings, conventions, and gatherings where they have opportunities to talk shop. Their attendance at these meetings depends on the exigencies of the day. This study has not dealt with the calculations that ADMs make when deciding how and when to present themselves before interest groups and other external stakeholders. However, the interviews show that most ADMs are aware that their attendance at certain events can be significant.

For some ADMs, participation in professional and occupational associations presents an opportunity to withdraw from the rigours and worries of work, while for others it provides an additional venue in which to pursue the business of the day. Meetings and conferences of professional associations enable ADMs to meet with others with whom scalar protocols and work routines may otherwise prevent interaction.

The view that senior government officials are always in meetings is overstated by critics of public management. Nevertheless, ADMs meet frequently in a variety of settings. That ADMs engage in meetings with others is hardly surprising, since such meetings promote efficiency and felicity of communications. Although senior officials communicate in writing, spoken communication often is preferred, given its flexibility. Matters can be discussed and ideas ventured without having to commit to record. In short, written documentation follows verbal understandings.

Beyond this there is a symbolic dimension to meeting with others that promotes a desire for ADMs to convene. Attendance alone is an indication of officials' commitment. Meeting dynamics also have symbolic and practical significance. When ADMs involve themselves in matters where the stakes are high, audiences are required. The imperative of meeting with others is hardly unique among ADMs. As noted in chapter 3, Corson and Paul and Kotter maintain that persons in powerful positions are rarely alone. It is also likely that this holds true for managers in less exalted posts.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

6.0. Introduction

This chapter is divided into three main sections. Section 6.1 summarizes research findings that apply to the principal lines of inquiry introduced in chapter 1. Topics include the core ADM functions and activities, selected factors affecting the performance of ADM job functions, the ADM at the nexus of politics and administration, the merit character of the ADM job, the influence of ADMs, and the effect of economic decline on the ADM job. Section 6.2 discusses the unique character of the ADM job and the effects on it of the Alberta political-administrative environment. Section 6.3 discusses research that flows from this study.

6.1. Findings from the Principal Lines of Inquiry

(1) Core ADM Functions

(a) Policy Formulation and Policy Advice

Analysis of ADM activities shows that these officials are involved in formulating policy and providing policy advice, of which the latter is considered more important. While the study data fail to provide the basis for a definitive commentary on the matter, statistical data on the frequency of interaction with the minister's office suggests that the greater importance assigned to briefing higher officials is a function of the higher percentage of time devoted to briefing as compared to formulating policy.

All ADMs offer policy advice to their deputy minister and minister. Some advise cabinet and caucus committees. With most deputy ministers carefully controlling any

ministerial liaison, policy advice originating at the ADM level normally flows through the deputy to the minister and other policy councils. Where this does not occur, it is either because something is amiss or because the deputy has so much trust and confidence in the ADM that there is no need to screen policy communications.

Policy advice and briefing information are presumably largely "technical" and administrative, although the distinction between administrative, policy, and political advice is not easily made.¹ ADMs are highly attentive to policy and political sensitivities of the government and the minister. The judgement exercised by ADMs involves organizing information and advice to reflect these sensitivities. Some of the advice is undoubtedly political, although it is most likely to be a "politics" of a sectoral character concerning the organized interests with which a department contends. In Alberta, until very recently, this has been the politics that has most concerned the government and the bureaucracy, since parliamentary party politics had little relevance.

Depending on the government's and minister's policy priorities and agenda, an ADM may be deeply involved for an extended time or almost completely uninvolved in formulating major policy statements and papers, regulations, and draft legislation.

Apart from responding to the requirements of their superiors, ADMs are independently proactive in their policy formulating role, bringing forward proposals that advance the government's agenda. During the boom years of the Lougheed administration the bureaucracy was expected to develop new program ideas and create policy frameworks to guide the actions of a rapidly growing public administration. During the Getty years of slow growth, downsizing, and less energetic government, ADM proactivity was not as evident, but the prerogative for inventiveness—even if it meant

¹ See Timothy Plumptre, *Beyond the Bottom Line* (Halifax: Institute for Research in Public Policy, 1989), 157.

scaling down operations and achieving efficiencies—remained. Among the new policies that ADMs interviewed for this study spoke proudly about developing were ones dealing with reducing social assistance rolls, forcing quasi-municipal jurisdictions to become full tax-based municipalities, weaning profit and non-profit organizations from public grants, and privatizing and “devolving” government services.

Many ADMs claimed that they are a source and inspiration for new policy initiatives. However, most also stressed that policy ideas come from all points within the policy community. ADMs spoke of ideas percolating up from inside their organizations and provided examples of proposals coming from outside their organizations. Similarly, examples were given of policy ideas emanating from the government caucus, the deputy minister, the departmental executive committee, and the minister.

While ADMs may not always be the source of policy ideas, they have a role in developing formulations that relate to their areas of organizational responsibility. Subordinate staff may be the principal authors of proposals, but the ADM’s watching brief is usually an active one. The process of converting an idea to a firm policy proposal is usually an incremental exercise during which officials within the government and stakeholders outside the department and government have an opportunity to view background papers and draft documents. However, even in these instances the ADM functions as a key gatekeeper, passing judgements on what is to be exposed and what is not, as well as what is to be taken forward and what is not.

The idea of ADMs as “champions” of ideas and initiatives is mentioned in association with their managerial leadership role. It could as easily have been discussed when describing their role in the policy process. Even though policy ideas emanate from many sources, and many officials have a hand in formulating policy proposals, it is

generally the ADM's responsibility to champion proposals to outside groups and to the minister either directly or indirectly.

Periodic encounters with caucus committees can be part of championing new policy initiatives. Under the Getty administration's policy machinery, departments would bring proposals before committees to obtain a "sounding" on the political acceptance of their contents. Presentations before cabinet committees served the same purpose, although all proposed legislation and new policy initiatives had to work their way through the cabinet committee machinery as a final part of the approval process.

ADM influence vanishes once the proposals reach the maw of the political executive's policy-making machinery. It is perhaps for this reason that ADMs place such high value on obtaining information about the minister's and government's preferences and priorities. By doing so, they are better able to develop policy proposals that are durable when launched into the political domain.

The degree to which ADMs are bound to their deputy minister in the policy formulation process depends not only on the deputy's control over the fate of ADM proposals, but also on the deputy's ability to give the ADM accurate information and useful insights into the minister's requirements. Most ADMs seek to cultivate alternative sources of information on ministerial and governmental preferences, since they hesitate to rely solely on their deputy minister's sources of information and insights. While this is not the only reason why ADMs rate those in the minister's office as being the primary actors with whom they deal, it undoubtedly is one of the more important ones.

There is some systematic variance in the extent to which ADMs participate in policy advisory and policy formulation activities. Program delivery ADMs are more active in their relationships with the minister's office than operational and administrative support ADMs, and marginally more so than planning and policy ADMs. When

compared on the Briefing and Policy Initiative Advice scales defined in chapter 4, there are no statistical differences among the ADM job function cohorts. Nonetheless, as indicated in chapter 4, if the Advice Scale activities of "pure" planning and policy ADMs are compared with those of other job cohorts, the evidence suggests that these officials specialize in developing and providing policy advice.

It is difficult to state with certainty whether the Comparative Elite Project authors' Image III is the dominant depiction of Alberta ADM policy roles. This image, which acknowledges that officials engage in a politics which focuses on maintaining relationships between system actors within an existing "parallelogram," typifies policy advisory activities described by many program delivery ADMs. At the same time, the statistical record reveals that many officials in administrative support—and to a lesser extent in planning and policy—positions engage outside interests less actively and therefore operate more in the Image II mode that emphasizes the division between technocratic and political competencies. The Image IV mode, wherein officials operate as agents, and perhaps even as "commissars," of the central administration, is not especially apparent, although some officials spoke about the politicization of certain departments and ADM jobs. The question remains open, but what is of interest for present purposes is that the prediction that the Image I and Image II modes dominate the character of Alberta ADM policy related activities does not stand up to scrutiny.

(b) Corporate Function

Osbaldeston's description of the federal deputy minister's collective management responsibilities has the deputy operating on behalf of the government, and for an even higher calling. This higher calling involves ensuring that the core ideas of professional public administration are served. It requires the top officer to balance the demands of

multiple accountabilities and to exercise independent judgement in making decisions that are thought to promote the business of good government.

These depictions apply in some measure to Alberta deputy ministers, who operate on behalf of the government owing to their Order-in-Council appointments. Alberta deputies have multiple responsibilities, since they answer in some fashion to the ombudsman, auditor general, public service commissioner, provincial treasurer, and others for the performance of their jobs. Yet, it would be inaccurate to depict the Alberta deputy ministers' corporate role in the same vein as that of their federal counterparts. While Alberta deputy ministers are clearly responsible to numerous system actors, they are not strictly accountable to them, as are their federal counterparts. Moreover, perhaps owing to the lack of a strong public service tradition, or the rare change of government parties, Alberta deputy ministers seldom articulate their role as standing in some measure apart from the government and functioning as protectors of a higher commonweal interest. The notion of these administrators as guardians of a separate and higher concept of government does not have broad currency. Alberta deputy ministers' collective responsibilities are more narrowly drawn than those of federal deputy ministers.

The lack of a civil service tradition, a professional public service ethos, and a limited interpretation of the deputy minister's collective responsibility help to shape ADM interpretations of their corporate responsibilities. It is possible to find Alberta ADMs with exceedingly strong collective management responsibility ethoses and a much stronger commitment to public administration professionalism than their deputy ministers have, but in general they do not overreach their superiors. Moreover, there is less reason for ADMs to be concerned about the collective responsibilities of government, since they are not appointed by the premier to their positions, and do not possess the multiple responsibilities of their deputy ministerial superiors.

ADMs nonetheless embrace certain corporate responsibilities. Most notable, at the government level, is the administrative and operation support ADMs' commitment to maintaining the integrity of central administration systems. ADMs designated as senior financial officers have formal responsibilities, but officials responsible for administering personnel policies and materiel management policies also have similar commitments. Since many ADMs are party to interdepartmental collaborative initiatives in which they cooperate with their counterparts to coordinate programs, they too carry certain collective responsibilities. Granted, ADMs participate in these arrangements principally as representatives of their departments and they often vigorously defend and champion departmental interests in the interdepartmental setting. However, the rationale for collaborating is also corporate and the success of collaboration relies to some degree on officials adopting a collective management ethos in the conduct of interdepartmental business.

ADMs clearly shoulder collective management responsibilities within their departments. These nominally include representing the minister and deputy minister when they are unable to be present, as well as carrying ministerial, deputy ministerial, and executive committee decisions and priorities to their divisional lines, and to other institutional actors and clients. While all departmental officials are charged with representing ministerial and departmental policies, ADMs carry special burdens, as they are usually party to departmental policy decisions and often speak directly as representatives of the minister and deputy minister. Even when they do not make direct representations on behalf of the minister or deputy minister, their position within the department usually leads other system actors to assume they speak authoritatively as corporate representatives of departmental policy and their minister's agenda.

Assumptions of this sort are not normally extended to the next level of executive management and certainly not to lower orders of management.

(c) Departmental Management

This study shows that deputy ministers are indisputably the core communicators of their departments. As already noted, all policy advice normally passes over their desks on the way to the minister and higher policy bodies. Similarly, most ministers conduct major policy discussions with senior departmental personnel through the deputy. Deputy ministers also are in frequent contact with a host of political actors, the general public, other deputy ministers, and important interest group and business representatives.

Although ADMs are the nexus of communication for their divisions, their situation is not an analogue of the deputy minister at the departmental level. With ADMs sitting on the vertical communication lines running from the lower orders of the bureaucracy to the highest levels, they have control over the information and representations that move on the axis. However, unlike the deputy minister, they do not have the same level of hegemony over communications moving vertically up the communication path. An ADM's subordinates have greater opportunity to communicate with the deputy minister and other senior department officials than ADMs have to deal with the minister.

ADMs and their subordinate managers are not as distinguished by the frequency with which they interact with many extra-departmental actors as are deputy ministers, who tend to have a broader range of contacts than their subordinates. Yet, as has been noted, frequency of interaction data is not the only measure of the character of organizational communications. Communication within the Alberta public service operates largely according to scalar protocols and there are qualitative differences in communications that correspond to hierarchical levels. Those at higher levels often

possess information relating to governmental direction, ministerial intentions, and other important corporate matters that is not found lower in the organization. Indeed, the differences in the quality of information existing between each level of the department hierarchy often appear to be quite significant. Consequently, the frequency of interaction may have less bearing on being at the nexus of communication than the content of the communications and the significance attributed to the rank of the communicators.

In matters relating to technical questions and to activity in the field, this strata effect tends to isolate those higher in the organization from important knowledge. However, ADMs are closer to these communications than the deputy minister, and because of their technical knowledge and situational appreciation they are often much more able than the deputy to understand the technical and situational realities of the organization. ADMs can be among the best informed officials in the whole of government, since they are often better positioned than deputy ministers to acquire and interpret technical and situation-specific information while also being privy to information about government priorities and ministerial direction as a consequence of their strong ties to the deputy minister and the minister's office. Although their knowledge of technical and situational matters is normally not as complete as that of their subordinates, and their knowledge of government policy and ministerial preferences is not as complete as that of the deputy minister, they can "cover" both domains better than those above and below them. What is so important about this observation is that ADMs possess great discretion, authority, and influence and this gives them considerable leverage in using knowledge that comes from their strategic position in the hierarchy. Conversely, ADMs can be very isolated, since they must rely on others to provide information about the minister's preferences, and about activities at the lower levels of their division.

Corson and Paul's contention that the most important skill officials near the top possess is the ability to communicate effectively cannot be supported unequivocally, but the evidence reveals that this skill is one of the most important. ADMs communicate constantly with a broad range of key system actors. Moreover, they must be able to adapt their communications to suit the circumstances. There is a strong premium on the ability to avoid "mis-speaking," since the ADM's words are presumed to emanate from the centre of the department. ADMs give speeches to public and "client" group gatherings, enter into serious negotiations with important interest groups and corporate and governmental actors, and deal with individuals who, if unhappy with the response from their department, have recourse through political channels or the press. All of this requires ADMs to be accomplished communicators.

Among the essential communication tasks considered in the study was that of capitalizing on existing communication vehicles and creating new ones to ensure effective internal and external communications. Evidence was not systematically collected on ADMs' use of existing communication vehicles. However, it is clear from the interviews that ADMs are opportunistic in using established communications media and forums for their own ends. Some ADMs use the departmental executive committees to press their point of view. Similarly, in the interdepartmental environment ADMs use committee and task force meetings to champion their causes. Ear-bending sessions, telephone calls, and visits for the purpose of gathering support in advance of a meeting on a particular item are all tactics that are in evidence.

ADMs seek out opportunities to talk with their deputy ministers and ministers. Many of the study respondents spoke of various stratagems they use to acquire "quality time." Some ADMs take advantage of opportunities to travel with their ministers, while others learn the deputy minister's habits in order to catch the DM without a palace guard.

ADMs also develop strategies for broaching new ideas that they believe may initially meet with resistance. A common strategy is to introduce such topics subtly, in order to obtain the minister's or deputy minister's initial reaction.

Outside of government, forums exist that give ADMs opportunities to converse and exchange ideas with various key system actors. They devote considerable time to conferences and executive and special meetings of client associations. ADMs attend professional meetings, business seminars, high profile educational events, openings of new government buildings, and various other types of "launches." While they may not always be travelling the banquet circuit, ADMs nonetheless spend a good deal of time showing the departmental flag and capitalizing on opportunities to speak privately and casually at events.

New forums and communication vehicles are also initiated by ADMs. Some ADMs create advisory committees and even more elaborate councils that bring policy actors together. In recent times ADMs have become increasingly involved in new interdepartmental committees. These committees, which ADMs often convene and chair, have emerged in response to a need to coordinate government activity in a time of greatly diminished financial and personnel resources. Downsizing has also proceeded in such a fashion that interdepartmental committees are required to bridge gaps in the logic of departmental organization.

"Peer colleges" are not unique to ADMs but they nonetheless represent an important communication vehicle. A few of these colleges are freestanding or highly developed. A network of female executives who attend monthly lunch meetings is among the most defined. Many peer colleges are not networks, but rather a manifestation of an ADM's Rolodex. It often happens that for reasons of similar professional focus and trust,

loosely defined networks emerge among like-minded persons who have the proclivity and a reason to communicate with one another on a regular basis.

The importance of professional associations may have been underemphasized in the analytical chapters. Through their meetings and other activities, the organizations provide unique venues in which ADMs can connect with others who have similar professional interests and training. Peer networks often develop from contacts made at meetings of professional associations or within the working groups of these organizations.

Much is said in the administration literature about the importance of managerial leadership. The Alberta executive profile and the federal government's "Profile of Public Service Leaders and Managers" place heavy emphasis on leadership. Indeed, the federal profile equates executive management at the ADM level with leadership. Evidence in this study clearly points to the importance of administrative leadership in the ADM job. However, there is little evidence of what is described as "visionary leadership." Few Alberta ADMs take on the task of creating and proselytizing an organizational vision, and reifying and vivifying a companion organizational culture and predominant set of values. Undoubtedly one of the reasons why they are not overly willing to strike off in bold new directions is that the decision-making processes and political oversight machinery of government are constricting. Moreover, while they help to define the culture and articulate visions for their organizations, these activities are also done by the deputy minister, the minister, and the larger government central and political administration. In fact, the cultures and outlooks of the organizations that ADMs head are often powerfully defined by institutional forces inside and outside the organization.

Although visionary leadership is not often found, ADMs clearly provide program direction. They position and orient their organization in anticipation of new developments and respond to changes in government priorities and policies. ADMs carry heavy

responsibility for sustaining the momentum that ensures program and policy thrusts are successful. In times of economic restraint, sustaining momentum is crucial, as programs previously approved are threatened with funding cuts and the withdrawal of political support. Moreover, as executive and management personnel dwindle through retirement and departures, "orphaned" programs require champions within the system so that they do not lapse. ADMs' executive manager subordinates also share responsibility for sustaining program momentum, and their assessments of program viability and importance are significant. And yet, it is the ADM who champions programs at the highest departmental levels and in this an important qualitative difference exists between the echelons.

Risk is associated with the ADM job even though true "entrepreneurial" behaviour is not evident. Much of this risk is a consequence of having to "fend off" all manner of representations, intervene to resolve conflicts, and regulate upward-bound communications. The risk is heightened by the ever-present possibility that the most innocuous matter can become highly politicized. This kind of risk is inherent in all higher public management, but at the ADM level mistakes can be particularly devastating, since ADMs' actions and words are taken by others as representing the policy and preference of the department.

ADMs work closely with subordinates in planning strategic initiatives as well as executing the daily business of the department. They exhibit a range of managerial styles, but it is clear that gaining and sustaining the support of subordinates is important to the success of divisional operations. ADMs must work through members of their management team to accomplish ministerial and departmental goals, and must rely on these officials' assistance to develop proposals and plans of action. Assistant deputy

ministers must also rely on subordinate officials for technical advice, since assistant deputies are seldom versed in all the professional specialties of their division.

While the Alberta public service operates with attention to the merit principle, it is nevertheless possible for ADMs to assemble subordinate management teams that are to their liking. This may involve shuffling subordinates, or placing pressure on them so that they fall into line or choose less stressful and more fulfilling work situations. These tactics are applied at all levels of the public service, but have special force when directed against non-unionized executive level personnel.

Corson and Paul assert that substantive technical and professional knowledge is essential for the successful execution of high level management responsibilities in the public sector. This is disputed in more recent public administration writings which tend to support a generalist public management position. Although this is only touched upon in the study, it can be said that the requirement for substantive knowledge is greater for ADMs than for deputy ministers. Conversely, substantive knowledge is generally even more important for lower levels of management. While both administrative generalists and those with strong substantive knowledge are found in ADM positions, when career and educational background data are considered, it appears that ADMs holding substantive knowledge are more prevalent than administrative generalists.

Nevertheless, a matter of special interest is the extent to which ADMs who are generalists have become prevalent in the public service. ADM positions in health, advanced education, and social services departments were initially staffed by persons who possessed professional credentials in occupations dominating service delivery in their fields. Medical professionals were found at the apex of the health department, educators at the apex of advanced education, and social workers at the apex of social services. By the early 1990s, representation in the highest ranks had changed to the extent

that no physician was found in the top bureaucratic positions of the health department, no social workers staffed ADM jobs in the social services ministry, and no educators were found at the top of the department of Advanced Education. Most ADMs surveyed in these departments describe themselves as managers or public managers. These self-described public managers are undoubtedly competent in the performance of their jobs; however, the knowledge they possess is a knowledge of governmental systems and the policy milieu rather than technical and specialized professional knowledge. Tellingly, in the Alberta government, generalist ADMs appear to have moved into positions where cost cutting is important, or where the character of programs must be changed significantly.

Alberta ADMs have a role to play in managing the external context of their divisions, and are key actors in framing and sustaining relationships with extra-departmental actors. ADMs often "jump start" relationships between the department and external interests, and after doing so hand the files over to subordinate staff. If conflicts develop and a relationship needs reaffirmation, the ADM often re-enters the picture. ADMs maintain control over many relationships in this fashion, and play an important symbolic representation role by inaugurating relationships and selectively reintroducing themselves at a working level when this is warranted by the higher interests of the division and department.

Some external relationships can be managed only by ADMs. When meeting high level delegations, ADMs are often the lowest strata of official that is acceptable to represent the ministry. In other instances, where they are appointees to bodies such as intergovernmental and interdepartmental committees, protocol requires their attendance. In general, within the public service external relationships are managed with particular attention to scalar protocols. These protocols can be amended, but it almost always involves petitioning a counterpart.

The analytical chapters focus on the differences among ADMs in their relations with central agencies. Although statistical analysis fails to reveal any significant differences, the interviews suggest that administrative and operational support ADMs have stronger ties with central agencies than program delivery and planning and policy ADMs. The ties among the finance oriented ADMs are enhanced by their common career and professional backgrounds as well as periodic general meetings with the provincial controller. In recent years a number of officials have moved from the Treasury department into senior finance positions in a number of departments, and this seems to have strengthened ties between the Treasury and their departments.

Planning and policy ADMs have the highest frequency of contact with peers in other departments. There are requirements in the government's RFD (request for decision) process that attention be given to the interdepartmental ramifications of proposed policies, regulations, and initiatives. These requirements necessitate contact with other departments. Beyond the formal requirements, it seems that planning and policy ADMs actively engage colleagues in other departments so that government activities can be coordinated.

ADMs' contacts with caucus and Legislative Assembly committees almost always involve managing the external context. Caucus committee appearances are usually made to ascertain political support and potential areas of political opposition to departmental initiatives. Legislative Assembly committee appearances usually involve appearing before the Public Accounts Committee to explain the specifics of departmental expenditures, although from time to time ADMs appear with their deputy minister or minister before other legislature committees.

Relationships with members of the Legislative Assembly are not wholly devoted to managing the external context, since MLAs often seek the assistance of ADMs to

resolve problems in their constituencies and to help their constituents. These queries usually flow through the minister's or deputy minister's office, particularly when it is opposition MLAs who are involved. ADMs are free to deal directly with government MLAs, but tend to redirect opposition MLAs' queries through the minister's office. Thus, dealings with opposition MLAs are often at arm's length. Some ADMs indicate that their department will take extra steps to place government MLAs in a favourable light if a new project is being launched in their constituency.²

Many ADMs interviewed stated that they are very cautious about becoming involved with MLAs who often seek out ADMs to extract favours and special considerations from them. On occasion, however ADMs apparently use an MLA's interest in program and policy matters to promote departmental interests within the caucus and political executive. This is a subtle game ADMs play and one they are willing to speak about only obliquely. The difference between these tactics of lobbying the minister and government and those attributed to American bureaucrats³ is that the Alberta ADMs are much more passive and normally do not attempt to create opportunities to make their case. Parenthetically, some ADMs maintain that regionally based executive managers are very active in courting MLAs, although it is unclear how aggressive they are or how they do it.

Program delivery ADMs are often very active in their involvements with interest groups. These relationships can occur in a variety of forms. Evidence of closed and open policy networks is found. There is the spectre of corporatist or "concertationist" relationships, even though the study was not structured to verify their extent.

² How widespread this practice is cannot be determined using the data collected.

³ See Joel D. Aberbach, Robert D. Putnam, and Bert A. Rockman, *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 22.

Program delivery ADMs in the natural resource and economic development cohort have especially high frequencies of interaction with interest groups, while their counterparts in the coordination of government departments are significantly less involved with these important system actors. Thus, while all program delivery ADMs are involved in dealing with external constituents, there are notable differences that are tied to departmental functions. Cawson's observation that officials oriented to the "production sector" relate more intensely with their constituencies than those who deal with "consumption or state sectors" is not borne out in the study.⁴ The frequency of interaction between the economic and resource development ministries is not statistically distinguished from that of the human resource department cohort ADMs' interactions with interest group and association representatives. However, if contact with private sector business representatives is included, Cawson's claim is vindicated, since they are properly regarded as interest actors and dealings with them greatly increase the proportionate interest group liaison activity of the economic development and natural resource cohort.

ADMs in a number of departments appear to have distanced themselves recently from the close relationships they have had with interest groups and associations and this distancing can be attributed to the strains of downsizing and cutbacks. At the same time, there has been a counter-trend as officials seek to reconstitute relationships. These new relationships are based less on government financial largesse and more on attempts to redefine state and interest group relationships. Described as "partnerships," which they only sometimes are, the relationships represent a logical turn wherein government and organized interests seek to establish relationships based on concertation of efforts rather

⁴ See Alan Cawson, "Pluralism, Corporatism and the Role of the State," *Government and Opposition* 13 (1978): 196-97.

than financial dependency. It is clear that the function of managing the extragovernmental context is very important for program delivery ADMs.

Students of bureaucracy have observed that the character of administrative relationships with constituent actors is contingent on a number of dynamics. Several have been investigated, including ministerial and deputy ministerial style and preferences, job function, departmental function, and the character of officials' policy networks. Beyond this there are factors that relate to the unfolding dynamics of the policy cycle,⁵ and the government's level of public support.⁶ These factors are evident in the relationships of ADMs involved in managing the external environment. For example, the general effect of fiscal restraint within the bureaucracy is to heighten the influence of the Treasury department. Administrative and operational support officials also enjoy enhanced influence. However, a new dynamic has emerged as program delivery ADMs with ingenuity and judgement become influential in departments forced to cut costs and become innovative in service delivery.

ADMs perform a number of basic management functions, including planning, delegating, and controlling the administration of their organization. Beyond the fact that they perform these functions, this study's most important finding concerning basic administration is that ADMs are not distinguished from their subordinates or their deputies in defining long-range plans, conducting yearly performance appraisals, and assessing program effectiveness. The inability to establish a difference between ADMs and their subordinate managers in matters of long-range planning places in question the

⁵ Scott Bennett and Margaret McPhail, "Policy Process Perceptions of Senior Canadian Federal Civil Servants: A View of the State and its Environment," *Canadian Public Administration* 35, no. 3 (Autumn 1992): 299-316.

⁶ See Colin Campbell, "Conclusion," in *Organizing Governance, Governing Organizations*, ed. Colin Campbell and B. Guy Peters (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press), 369-88.

Alberta Personnel Office's job descriptions that indicate different levels of executive management are responsible for long-range and medium-term planning.

The supposition that ADMs consume proposals and ideas deserves mention. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence shows that ADMs work at a frenetic pace, that legions of others demand their time, and that they spend many hours attending meetings and communicating by telephone. The ADM work routine is therefore highly fractured. The disjointed nature of their work was evident when attempting to arrange the study interviews. Some of the most willing participants had difficulty arranging an interview on short notice and some interviews had to be rescheduled. As a consequence, a number of interviews were conducted in the evening when the officials were at home, at breakfast meetings, or on the weekend. Several interviews were interrupted by calls from the deputy minister and minister. In short, it was difficult for many officials to free up a large enough block of time for a complete interview.⁷

Given that their work routines are constantly being revised, and that they are required to react to exigencies and be available for the deputy minister and minister, the supposition that ADMs are not the principal authors of policy documents and research studies rings true. However, the fact that ADMs normally are not the principal authors of major documents should not lead one to conclude that they are not involved in their authorship. While others may carry the principal burden of conducting research, ADMs often contribute to the framing of studies. ADMs almost always play a role as critics of draft policy documents and proposals. Moreover, they polish the final proposals and documents that move upward. These contributions are compatible with their fractured work schedules, and are consistent with the ADM gatekeeper function.

⁷ In several instances telephone interviews had to be conducted in two parts, given ADM time constraints.

ADMs do not personally conduct studies and write formal research reports, but they are continually involved in research activities. They gather information from many sources so that judgements can be made concerning policy and program matters. ADMs certainly are not unique in conducting this kind of “research,” but within their divisions the responsibility falls on them to assay the strategic directions of the government and their implications for the organization.

(2) Selected Factors Affecting Performance of Core Functions

Several factors presumed to be associated with differences in the importance and performance of key tasks and differences in relational patterns between ADMs and key system actors are investigated in the analytical chapters. Among these are departmental size, supervisory style, departmental function, and job function. Each of these factors is associated in some fashion with differences in ADM performance, even though these relationships are often weak and in some cases they are unquestionably spurious.

Kotter’s supposition that the larger the organization the bigger the job is not confirmed when using departmental size as the measure of organizational size. The most notable findings associated with size relate to ADMs in the smallest departments, who interact much more frequently with the deputy minister and the minister’s office than do ADMs from large departments. This presumably is a function of the “intimacy” and familiarity promoted by the small size of these organizations. This also explains why ADMs from medium-sized departments interact with the minister’s office with greater frequency than ADMs in larger departments. The fact that ADMs from small and medium-sized departments engage peers in other departments with greater frequency than peers from larger ones is not a function of size despite a statistically significant relationship. Here departmental size is most likely associated with aspects of departmental focus and function. The point is underscored when noting that central

agency and "ministry of state" types of departments, which have pan-bureaucratic liaison responsibilities, are small and medium-sized.

ADMs from large departments are distinguished by the higher frequency of their interactions with government backbenchers. It is dubious that this distinction is a function of departmental size. A more likely explanation is that large departments produce and deliver regional services or across-the-counter services throughout the province. Since regional and "customer" services interest MLAs, and since ADMs' contacts with MLAs favour government members, it is logical that ADMs in these departments have a disproportionately high number of contacts with government backbenchers.

Predictions that organizational size is associated with greater amounts of friction and conflict are not confirmed. It is true that two larger departments, Social Services and the Solicitor General's, have historically experienced labour problems not evident in many smaller departments. However, while it might be argued that size and labour conflict are related in these departments, the factors promoting strife are much more complex. As one example, the militancy of Alberta prison guards undoubtedly has more to do with the character of their jobs than the size of the department. As another example, social workers are at odds with top management because they believe that they are overworked and that the government is insensitive to the needs of those in their case files.

Finally, a relationship between size and friction is ultimately very hard to discern, since officials go to great lengths to avoid mention of conflict and departmental friction within their departments. In the interviews a number of officials spoke about friction and conflict only after the matter was diligently pressed.

Departmental function is associated with certain relationship differences, of which some are unexpected. ADMs within the natural resource and economic development area had high levels of interaction with key system actors and they consistently differ from

coordination of government ADMs who had low interaction frequencies with extra-governmental system actors.

It is not surprising that ADMs who function as internal coordinators have fewer interactions with extragovernmental actors, since these officials are presumed to be "internally oriented." The natural resource and economic development ADMs' high levels of interaction with outside actors are largely explained by Cawson's prescriptions concerning the state's propensity to be more actively involved with the "production" sector. There are political and economic reasons for close relations. The economic reason given by Alberta premiers is that of stimulating business enterprises so that the Alberta economy might prosper. The Lougheed governments provided cash incentives, while Getty relied on loan guarantees, tax concessions, and other means that enabled his government to help business without making cash outlays.

There are notable differences in the activities that are associated with the ADM job function. Most suppositions defining differences in the characteristics of supporting staff managers are borne out in some measure if administrative and operational support ADMs are taken as the measure. For example, it is presumed that their responsibilities for administering the rules defined by central agencies require them to exercise control over the actions of their ADM colleagues. Comments made during the interviews indicate that these officials do indeed exercise such control. The extent to which this creates friction between administrative ADMs and their colleagues varies with style and circumstances. Some program delivery ADMs speak of difficulties that they encounter in dealing with their administrative and operational support colleagues, who they claim are rule-bound. Many administrative support ADMs recognize that these difficulties exist and a number indicated that they spend considerable time attempting to overcome problems caused by

administrative rules, including educating their program delivery colleagues about them. Other administrative support ADMs appear to be less accommodating.

There is clear evidence that administrative and operational support ADMs interact with their departmental peers more frequently than program delivery ADMs do. The more frequent interaction is attributed to a requirement to communicate with program officials and by the program officials' requirement to deal with them on administrative matters that bear directly on their operations. They are not distinguished from their planning and policy colleagues who are, technically speaking, also supporting staff managers.

Many of Corson and Paul's suppositions that apply to program managers are supported by study findings about program delivery ADMs. These officials are less active in departmental peer interactions than their administrative and operational support colleagues, although they are not statistically distinguished from planning ADMs. Program delivery ADMs differ significantly from their administrative support colleagues in extra-organizational dealings with interest groups, caucus committees, MLAs, and private citizens. They do not differ from the other ADM cohorts in their dealings with business persons, which is explained by the need for planning and policy ADMs and administrative ADMs to discuss policy matters and conduct business with private sector representatives. They also do not differ from the other cohorts in their dealings with Legislative Assembly committees.

Program delivery ADMs persuade, negotiate, and generally represent departmental interests outside the department and the government. In this a supposition is confirmed. However, persuading and negotiating are not restricted to extragovernmental relationships, and program delivery ADMs are no more likely to engage in these behaviours than their administrative and planning peers. Although there are clearly

exceptions to this rule, ADMs normally prefer to persuade and accommodate as a favoured means of doing business. This is the case even in situations where they have authority to command. Their reliance on this “human-sided” management approach reflects the fact that success is often tied as much to the form of interactions as to their substance. Indeed, often, the form of interactions appears to be what is most important.

A supposition that is not borne out by the evidence is that program ADMs are less active in their liaisons with members of their first profession. The statistical evidence fails to support this, and the interviews suggest that some program delivery ADMs are strongly referenced to their first profession despite having ceased to practise it.

Planning and policy ADMs interact most frequently with members of their principal profession, and if this evidence is combined with interview descriptions of the character of policy ADMs’ work, they appear to be the ADM job function cohort that most closely resembles Corson and Paul’s managers of professionals.⁸ Certainly, the work environment in policy shops is loosely supervised and the business of the organization appears to be very much the business of the profession. However, a portion of the loose supervision is a consequence of the smallness of policy and planning organizations. Since their definition of their profession often tends to be vaguely construed (e.g., planner, analyst), the high level of interaction that they report with members of their first profession must be regarded with some caution. In brief, while factors suggest that policy ADMs conform most closely to the manager of professionals image portrayed in chapter 3, the picture is not complete and it is reasonable to conclude that at the ADM level it is not possible to define a distinct manager of professionals cohort.

⁸ See the description of managing policy “shops” in Canada’s federal government in Timothy Plumptre, *Beyond the Bottom Line*, 309–17.

One reason a distinct manager of professionals cohort is not defined at the ADM level is that most assistant deputies appear to supervise their immediate subordinates with the same loose style closely associated with managers of professionals. Loose supervision of executive management subordinates, a balancing of organizational and divisional requirements, and the reframing of technical and professional messages into ones that can be readily understood by the deputy, minister, and political executive all are hallmarks of routine supervision of the ADM's management team. Thus, the character of management employed within divisional executive teams tends to be that of managing professionals.

(3) ADMs at the Nexus of Politics and Administration

ADMs do not perform the same role as deputy ministers in dealing with the political and administrative universes. Deputy ministers are the hinge between the political and administrative domains, since they control access to political officials and have high levels of contact with the minister and other politicians. The very nature of deputy ministerial appointments, their connections within the corporate system of communication, and their sweeping corporate responsibilities bring them much closer to the political realm than most ADMs ever get. The deputy ministers' proximity to this realm makes their position within the nexus one that is qualitatively different from that of ADMs.

Notwithstanding these important differences between deputy ministers and ADMs, it is clear that ADMs operate within the political-administrative nexus, a zone where political and administrative considerations meet. Within parliamentary systems this zone may spread to the top of the political administration and well down into the echelons of the bureaucracy. In the centre of this zone is the relationship between minister and deputy minister, while close to the centre is the dyadic relationship between the ADM and the deputy minister, and the relationship between ADMs and the deputy

minister. This is evident from the fact that a great deal of the activity in this relationship involves melding political and administrative factors. The position of third tier executive officials in the nexus is highlighted by the notable absence of contact with political actors and, relative to ADMs, their significantly fewer contacts with deputy ministers.⁹ These officials also do not participate in important nexus forums such as the departmental executive committee, the caucus, and cabinet committees.

(4) The Merit Character of the Job

Since Alberta lacks an independent public service commission and is characterized by long-standing majoritarian governments, there is reason to suspect that the merit principle may not be adequately protected. Analysis of career movement within the Alberta bureaucracy shows that the vast majority of officials reaching the higher ranks move up through the administrative system. Only a few have entered public service positions from political posts and most of these movements have occurred in stages, with the officials being appointed to Order-in-Council (OIC) posts and later to ADM jobs.

A more prevalent practice is for candidates to be selected with attention to ministerial preferences or, in some instances, through direct ministerial intervention. A number of cases were reported in the interviews. The Personnel Administration Office is unable to prevent such practices, given the subtlety with which they are undertaken. PAO officials report occasional conflicts with departments over names of candidates on executive selection short lists. On rare occasions the PAO has strongly objected to a candidate submitted by a department. However, in most cases there are not reasonable

⁹ The fact that ADMs place greater importance than their subordinates on developing insight into the views and direction of the minister (t-value = 3.19, p=.0016, adjusted R-squared =.037) underscores ADMs' stronger orientation toward political considerations. ADMs score 4.44 out of a potential 5.0 score on rating the importance of *develop insight into the views and direction of the minister*. Their subordinates score a much lower 3.81.

grounds for objecting to short-listing candidates who may benefit from ministerial preference. What appears to be of concern when there is political involvement is whether the candidates are sympathetic to government policies. Some officials interviewed stated that the personal likes and dislikes of ministers also entered the equation.

Broadly speaking, a merit regime operates in the Government of Alberta, but it is open to occasional violations. It is debatable whether the violations are harmful to the public. Governments must have officials who understand the purposes of their policies and are willing to carry them out. Moreover, at the ADM level, clarity in articulating departmental and ministerial purposes and initiative in providing ideas for administrative and policy innovations are of considerable importance. These officials are gatekeepers of policies and communications, and officers who "fend off" and resolve conflicts that occur within the many policy systems, and therefore they cannot be hostile to the purposes of the minister and government. It seems logical that ministerial preferences would be anticipated when appointments to ADM positions are made. What may be open to question is not whether the merit regime should be asserted with greater vigour, but whether Alberta ADMs should fall under the Public Service Act. There is a logic to, and some precedent in other provinces for, not including ADMs in the merit provisions of public service legislation.¹⁰

(5) The Influence of ADMs

An important reason for studying ADMs is that they are influential system actors. This statement is made at the onset of the study as an article of faith informed by strong

¹⁰ See J. D. Love, "The Merit Principle in the Provincial Governments of Atlantic Provinces," *Canadian Public Administration* 31, no. 1 (Fall 1988), 349.

academic evidence and Weber's famous dictum on the power of the bureaucracy.¹¹ The study provides evidence of this influence.

Of particular interest are the bases of influence and the techniques used by ADMs to exercise influence. ADMs' influence up the chain of command is based on technical expertise, situational knowledge, and the capacity to control communications. It is enhanced not only by their possession of knowledge and expertise, but also by exigent circumstances of the organization and the favour of the deputy and the minister.

ADMs work to enhance their ability to influence their superiors, as this can determine whether or not they are able to champion proposals, acquire resources, and prevent calamities. With deputy ministers and ministers, this involves maintaining open communications and avoiding falling out of favour, in part by providing these people with what they want. ADMs can find this difficult, as the requirements of deputy ministers and ministers are often based on preferences and styles. The task was made even more arduous by the lack of clear policy direction that was a hallmark of the Getty government.

While they are but one link in the chain of command, ADMs are uniquely positioned to suppress or support major initiatives and enhance or devalue proposals moving upwards. Moreover, they have influence over the particulars of implementing policy and governmental directives, and are able to shape circumstances that necessitate or promote the next round of ministerial intervention.

Exercising influence in the chain of command is only partially a matter of using formal powers. ADMs must also employ suasion and other means to gain the support of subordinates. Their ability to choose which proposals to champion contributes to their

¹¹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, translated by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), 991.

influence on subordinates, since the success of proposals can mean a great deal to subordinate staff. The ability of ADMs to secure resources for the organization and to protect its elements also promotes their influence.

ADM influence with other departmental ADMs depends on their structural position and the exigencies of the external environment. In the case of finance officials and other supporting staff managers who deal with the central control agencies of government, there is a positional or functional basis to their power. Moreover, a number of ADMs said that certain organizational lines tend to dominate within their departments and the ADMs who head them tend to exercise proportionate influence among their peers.¹²

ADM influence varies with interest groups, business persons, and other actors in policy communities. Analyses of bureaucratic behaviour in policy networks reveal that in some types of networks (i.e., pressure-pluralist or state-directed) officials enjoy considerable influence and discretion, while in others (i.e., corporatist and parentela-pluralist) they normally have considerably less influence. Since there are a number of pressure-pluralist and state-directed policy networks in Alberta, it is safe to assume that many ADMs are influential in their dealings with advocacy and representative groups. Even if bureaucrats enjoy less independence in clientelist and concertationist networks, they are not without influence in them. And, the interview evidence suggests that even in these types of arrangements ADMs normally are not "captured" by other policy actors; they act as representatives of the government.

In sum, there is little doubt that ADMs possess considerable influence both within and outside of the bureaucracy, although it is generally restrained. Nevertheless, premiers

¹² See Frederick C. Mosher, *Democracy and the Public Service* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 123–25.

Lougheed and Getty were concerned about the potential abuse of bureaucratic influence and devised structures and rules to weaken it.

(6) The Effects of Economic Decline

Alberta's public service is not alone in experiencing the effects of economic decline and work force reduction. However, its pattern of dynamic growth followed by sharp decline may be one of the most illustrative. At the ADM level the strongest effect of economic decline has been a fundamental shift in attention from program development and planning to cost control and downsizing. Beyond effecting administrative efficiencies within the bureaucracy, a major focus of government cost control has been on the reduction of programs, including those involving the transfer of provincial funding through grants and other forms of largesse.

With downsizing have come important structural changes in the bureaucracy. Although Premier Lougheed was not able to reduce the size of his cabinet radically, he made important structural changes after 1981 in an effort to scale down the public service. Eliminating departments initially did not greatly reduce the number of ADMs in the system. Divisional and organizational lines were moved into other departmental structures and the number of personnel which ADMs supervised shrank. However, ADM jobs began to disappear during a second phase of downsizing initiated by Premier Getty in 1987.

Reduction of staff and emphasis on cost control and cutting have effects that go beyond simply redrawing departmental organizational charts. There is the previously mentioned migration of influence to those who control financial and other resources. Recently there has been a renaissance of line manager influence. The career structure of the bureaucracy has been transformed by the change in the focus and environment of the Alberta public service. Many ADMs who made it to the top as program builders during

the Loughheed years found it to their advantage to leave the public service. Subsequently, cost cutters assumed the top jobs and demonstrated business skills have become an important job requirement. Paradoxically, career mobility is both increased and decreased in the downsizing environment. It has decreased because many jobs in the public service have simply disappeared. However, career opportunities have increased for those with a record of successfully cutting costs, devising new program delivery schemes, and redefining policy network relationships. Their opportunities to progress upward are especially promising.

Performance of the ADM job is made more difficult by the randomness with which personnel encouraged by retirement incentive plans leave the public service. Corporate memory is reduced, and there are often serious breaks in the continuity of administration.

A challenge presented by cutbacks flows from the requirement to frame new relationships with external interest groups, which is a responsibility often shouldered by ADMs. In some instances these relationships require the ADM to break old compacts and to frame relationships in new terms, which generally involve the withdrawal of financial support and the removal of regulations and other forms of intervention, assistance, and control.

Downsizing and cost cutting present special challenges to organizational leadership. The requirement to provide divisional personnel with a clear notion of organizational direction gains importance. On the one hand, to the extent that a clear restraint policy is articulated by the political leadership, providing direction is simplified. On the other hand, cost cutting and downsizing directives coming from the political level are usually silent on substantive questions of policy, and executives quickly find

themselves operating in uncharted domains. These circumstances make providing organizational leadership difficult and risky.

6.2. Selected Conclusions and Unique Contributions of the Study

Comparative Perspectives on the ADM Position

(1) The ADM as Petit Deputy Minister

The conclusion to chapter 4 indicates that although there is a commonality in certain general management and external liaison functions performed by ADMs and deputy ministers, there are also noticeable differences. Collective management responsibilities, political level liaison, and departmental leadership are more important to the deputy minister job than they are to the ADM. Consequently, although the notion of ADM as petit deputy minister is not apt, there is relevance in ministerial and deputy ministerial nomenclature. ADMs do not have the same collective management responsibilities as deputy ministers, but nonetheless they shoulder some responsibility for corporate public administration, and more for departmental administration and policy. Similarly, while the deputy minister is responsible for managing communications with the political level, ADMs may have fairly frequent contacts with their ministers, contacts that are notably distinguished from those of their subordinates. Deputy ministers may be responsible for defining the departmental "vision," but ADMs also have a say in determining the strategic direction of departmental administration through participation in the departmental executive committee, and through the direction and program leadership they provide at divisional levels. In several departments ADM divisional leadership is the principal locus of department leadership. This observation is not found in the deputy ministerial literature.

Another important difference between ADMs and deputy ministers relates to the uniformity of the deputy ministerial job, which contrasts notably with the functional

diversity revealed in the ADM position. Distinctions which are made at the ADM level related to program delivery, administrative and operational support, and planning and policy focus are more difficult to make at the deputy minister level,¹³ and are generally not discussed in the deputy ministerial literature.

While it is not appropriate to regard ADMs as petit deputy ministers, it is nevertheless useful to consider their jobs as being unevenly sliced from the deputy position. The observation has an historical basis, since Alberta ADM jobs were created in the early 1970s to relieve deputy ministers of major administrative and liaison responsibilities.

(2) ADMs as Representative Executive Managers

The affinities which exist between ADMs and deputies tend to distance ADMs from lower orders of management. These differences apply principally to departmental collective management responsibilities, departmental level leadership, and passing informed judgement on policy proposals. In other areas the ADM job is often similar to that of the next level of management. Even in policy formulation there are important similarities between the activities of ADMs and their subordinates.

One reason for the similarities is that many third tier executive manager jobs originated in the very same circumstances that produced ADM positions. Third tier executive manager jobs were created to free ADMs from supervisory management so that they could concentrate on leading their organization, developing policy, managing external relationships, and assisting the deputy minister. Another reason for the creation of the third tier of executive management was to maintain executive control over areas of

¹³ Although one might assume certain differences between deputy ministers heading central agencies and those heading line departments, the differences are not nearly as profound as those that appear between ADMs.

technocratic specialization as the public service grew and its tasks became more complex. Within certain departments ADM expertise simply was not of an order that allowed for knowledgeable management of subordinate managers and professionals.

ADMs and third tier executives are functionally similar in that they perform supervisory management activities, relate to extra-organizational actors, and have functionally distinct foci for their activities (i.e., program delivery, operational and administrative support, policy and planning). ADMs champion proposals and programs at the highest department levels. Their executive manager subordinates play a similar role in relation to the ADM; they champion ideas and innovations up the administrative ladder and also have opportunities to act as gatekeepers.

ADMs and their executive subordinates deal with many of the same external actors, although often their interactions are functionally distinguished. While both executive directors and ADMs may do such things as inaugurate relationships, hand files to subordinates, and intervene when necessary, these activities occur on different levels. Thus, although ADM behaviour offers a great deal of insight into the functions of subordinates, the positions differ in focus and therefore substance.

Third tier officials are more actively involved in authoring policy proposals and yet they also rely on professionals and subordinate managers to do the composition. In the development of policy proposals, documents, and draft legislation, a number of interviewees claimed that the executive director plays a role similar to that of the ADM in making judgements as to the adequacy and appropriateness of materials. The difference between the two levels is in the greater appreciation that ADMs possess as to what is acceptable at the top.

What ultimately distinguishes ADMs from their subordinates is the level and informed quality of judgement exercised by ADMs. When they were asked about the

unique contribution of their position, the most frequent response was that of providing judgement. ADMs said that subordinates cannot adequately join together political and administrative considerations, cannot refine ideas and proposals beyond a certain point, and cannot easily master the protocols and particulars necessary to move information and ideas in the system. In other words, the disparate professional and technical foci of subordinates inhibit the development of a proper perspective on program leadership. The exercise of judgement that attends this perspective provides the most significant justification for the ADM job.

The Alberta Political-Administrative Environment

A question posed at the outset of the study is whether the character of the Alberta political administrative tradition has a bearing on the ADM job. To consider this question fully would require an investigation into the political-administrative culture of the province and then a systematic comparison with the political and administrative cultures of other jurisdictions. These tasks are beyond the scope of this study, but with this point acknowledged it is possible to offer selected comment.

Despite occasional abuses of the merit principle, there is a surprising lack of politicization of the bureaucracy given the long rule of the Progressive Conservatives. Some of this lack of politicization must be attributed to the progressivist good government tradition in Alberta. It is believed that the reformist and populist agenda that prevailed when the province was formed was carried forward by the United Farmers of Alberta in the 1920s and by Social Credit in the 1930s. These were "business governments" in the sense that they viewed themselves as committed to good administration and nonpartisanship, all of which framed the practice of provincial public administration. The Progressive Conservative governments of Lougheed and Getty operated in this business government tradition, sometimes adopting esoteric practices,

such as inventing Order-in-Council positions that nominally would be under public service legislation protection, to maintain the appearance of propriety.

The business government tradition may have contributed to the near absence of a public administration profession in the province. Public sector employment is viewed by some politicians and a portion of the citizenry as less than fully honourable work. Moreover, if interview comments and survey respondents' listings of first professions are anything to go by, employment in the public sector is not a calling but instead a satisfying job. While this orientation to public sector employment is not restricted to Alberta, the general absence of public sector professional self-identity appears especially pronounced.

Peter Lougheed modernized the Alberta public service. And yet, while introducing executive management into the system, he did not seek to create a public service tradition. To the contrary, high-ranking politicians were concerned that bureaucrats might usurp their power. As a consequence, deputy minister committees were forbidden and, with singular exceptions, bureaucrats were not permitted to sit in on cabinet level and cabinet committee meetings. Moreover, with what amounted to a near total removal of top ranking bureaucrats and wholesale new appointments from other jurisdictions, Lougheed largely eradicated any public administration tradition that developed during the Social Credit years. Premier Getty loosened restrictions against deputy ministerial meetings and inaugurated an executive training program, but these innovations are so recent and their pursuit so casual that their effect is unclear.

Finally, the effect on the development of a public service tradition of near hegemonic, long-running governments headed by powerful premiers cannot be underestimated. The civil service beholden to these leaders becomes incapable of considering policy agendas significantly different from those of the government.

6.3. Further Research

Little has been written about Alberta's public service. This study provides a basis for an Alberta political-administrative history which is of special interest owing to the unique political character of the province. Important questions that should be addressed include those broached in this study concerning the influence of progressivism, the lack of patronage, and the role of Alberta public administration in the growth of the provincial state.

This study has focused on assistant deputy ministers and to a lesser extent on their immediate superiors and subordinates. A promising line of further research and analysis is a more detailed exploration of additional differences between these echelons of administration, and between executive management and lower orders of management. For that matter, Alberta's deputy ministers and third tier executive officials also deserve focused attention.

Interactions between ADMs and other system actors are reported almost solely from the ADM's point of view. Another line of research would be to consider the role of ADMs and other officials from the perspective of those with whom they interact. Sufficient differences in perspectives were revealed in conversations with deputy ministers and the subordinates of ADMs to warrant this type of analysis.

The ADM role itself deserves additional investigation, as it is constantly being transformed. This is the case in Alberta, where in the brief time between conducting interviews and completing the writing a large percentage of the ADM population has retired or left the public service. The downsizing initiatives of the Getty government pale in comparison to those of the new Tory Premier, Ralph Klein, who has committed his government to a stringency program unprecedented in Alberta and, arguably, in Canada.

The Klein government is committed to a fundamental restructuring of the public sector, and in this the ADM is likely to continue to be a metaphor for the Alberta bureaucracy.

Finally, a more discriminating study of the work of higher officials is recommended. In order to obtain a more precise understanding of what it is ADMs and other senior officials do, students of public administration should assume the roles of observers in an action setting. Assistant deputy ministers, in particular, present themselves as interesting subjects for this type of research.

APPENDIX A

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Several different methods have been used to collect data. They include a self-administered questionnaire, personal interviews, archival research, and a literature review. Where officials were studied directly, a research plan was submitted for ethical approval to an internal committee of the University of Alberta, the institution at which the researcher was employed at the time the study was conducted. The sensitivity of certain aspects of the study necessitated this clearance.

The Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire (Appendix B) was developed through a literature review of similar public administration surveys, a broad consultation among senior officials in the Government of Alberta, and a pre-test. Two sections of the questionnaire are specifically devoted to interaction matters. Section 1 focuses on the frequency of interactions between the respondent and thirty different policy and administrative actors. The key system actors were identified through preliminary discussions with senior officials and a review of the relevant literature. Repeated revisions to initial drafts of the questionnaire and the pre-test provided opportunities to refine the list. The final list of salient actors is presented in three discrete groupings: Government of Alberta officials, politicians or their offices, and extra-organizational officials. Using a scale, respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they conducted some form of two-way communication with each of the individuals or official cohorts represented on the list. The scale was constructed so that respondents were required to provide a precise coefficient indicating the number of times that interaction took place within a specified period. Respondents were asked to determine the appropriate period by circling a choice

presented on the scale: daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly. Individual responses on each item ranged from no interactions to many interactions every day. The flexibility offered by the scale meant that the questions could be answered with a high degree of accuracy.

Section 2 uses the same list of key system actors but requests participants to indicate the importance of the respective interactions. A five-point scale is used to collect data with scale polar positions designated "not important" and "very important." "Very important" interactions are defined as those in which respondents must engage in order to successfully perform their jobs. "Not important" interactions are those which have no bearing on the successful performance of the job. Participants could also register a response of "not applicable." The low number of unusable responses in the first two sections suggests respondents had little difficulty understanding the questions.

Section 3 of the survey questionnaire inquired into the importance of forty selected administrative and policy oriented tasks. The same five-point importance scale is used with instructions that "very important" tasks were those essential to the successful performance of the job and "not important" tasks were unessential. Respondents could also indicate that a task was not applicable to their position. Administrative and policy tasks were selected from a list of core senior official activities identified through systematic research conducted by the Staff Development Branch of the Public Service Commission of Canada.¹ This research identified four levels of management task groupings in the federal government. The task groupings comprising each level—supervisory management, middle management, organizational management, and departmental management—are reportedly discrete. Selection involved picking roughly equal numbers of policy and administrative/management tasks which were thought to be

¹ Canada, Staff Development Branch, Public Service Commission, "Analysis Basis for Managerial Training," 1985 (unpublished document in loose-leaf binder).

applicable to the ADM position and to other executive level officials in the Government of Alberta. The difficulty in making the initial selection was to define tasks which would be differentially performed by ADMs and other executive level officials. The survey also captures data from deputy ministers and third tier executive officials for purposes of analytical comparisons with ADMs. Appropriately sixty items were chosen and included in pre-tests so that those which were likely to be performed by all, as well as those not performed by anyone, could be discarded. As the questionnaire was lengthy, it was imperative that total items be reduced to a manageable number.

Items that appear on the final draft of the questionnaire are divided into eight divisions bearing the following titles: preparing replies and briefing materials; preparing long-range plans and evaluating programs; consulting and providing advice; assisting superiors; preparing policy and legislation documents; managing organizational resources; managing organizational finances and budgets; and planning programs and services. Most respondents indicated the listed tasks were of importance to their job. Few respondents considered any of the tasks irrelevant.

Section 4 of the questionnaire is divided into two subordinate parts, career history and personal background. The purpose of the career history section is to collect data for the development of a profile of a respondent's sectoral and managerial experience, and career progress. Care was taken to develop questions so that responses could be compared with data collected from other similar studies. Personal background questions similarly were formulated, and questions relating to ethnic background, level of education, and academic concentration were framed with reference to standardized Statistics Canada categories.²

² When constructing the survey instrument, frequent reference was made to the useful manual prepared by R. Platek, F. K. Pierre-Pierre, and P. Stevens, *Development and Design of Survey Questionnaires* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1985).

The universe of the survey population included all departmental deputy ministers and bureau managing directors reporting directly to a minister, all Executive Manager IIs and Executive Manager Is under the lines of these deputies, and top bureau officials. The survey sample included 93 percent of the deputy/managing director cohort, 87 percent of the EM II cohort, and 75 percent of the EM I group.³ All deputies agreed to participate in the study; however, one position was vacant at the time the questionnaire was administered.

Obtaining access to senior officials is often difficult.⁴ Therefore, an access strategy was pursued in which the researcher traded on deputy-level contacts to acquire the support of the deputy minister of Executive Council. The deputy minister graciously wrote all departmental deputy ministers and bureau heads asking them to participate in the study and solicit their assistant deputy ministers' participation. Subsequently, the deputies were approached and asked that they encourage EM Is situated at the second and third tiers of their departments to participate in the study. In the latter instance responses were requested to effect comparisons between operationally defined ADMs and those reporting to them. Deputy ministers were included in the survey population to provide another basis for comparison.

The mail questionnaire response rate was 89 percent, with a total of 258 questionnaires mailed and 229 usable questionnaires returned. Information supplied on

³ Percentages are calculated as total of universe defined by the Personnel Administration Office in a computer print-out provided to the researcher dated October 1989.

⁴ Harvey Rich cites difficulties in gaining official permission to survey and interview officials. See H. Rich, "Higher Civil Servants in Ontario: A Case Study of an Administrative Elite" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1973). The comment was also made by David M. Cameron in "The Discipline and the Profession of Public Administration: An Academic's Perspective," *Canadian Public Administration* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1982): 506, and more recently in A. Paul Pross's reply to Donald Savoie's rant against the irrelevance of academic research into public administration. See A. Paul Pross, "Assessing Public Administration Education in Canada," *Canadian Public Administration* 33, no. 4 (Winter 1990): 631.

position classifications at two intervals by the Personnel Administration Office provided slightly different accounts of the respective number of Executive Manager IIs and Executive Manager Is in the system. By the time the survey mailing list was finalized even the more recent count had changed, as 1988–1990 was a period of retrenchment and executive positions were being eliminated through attrition. Ongoing down-sizing and restructuring activities clouded the exact size of the total executive management cohort. Therefore, a reasonable estimate of the number of executive management level officials at the time of the study would be 294, 69 EM IIs and 225 EM Is. There were twenty-seven deputy minister positions at the time the questionnaire was administered, two of which were vacant. Twenty-three of the deputies surveyed returned the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 92 percent. Sixty-three of the executive Manager IIs returned questionnaires, representing 91 percent of the sample.

The percentage of EM Is sent questionnaires was notably lower than the samples drawn for EM IIs and deputies. Availability of resources had a bearing on the numbers sent, as did the nature of the initial representation to the deputy minister of Executive Council, Dr. Barry Mellon. Originally, permission was asked to interview only officials whose titles identified them as assistant deputy ministers. Dr. Mellon offered to communicate to all deputy ministers the purpose of the research, thus inadvertently placing limitations on expanding the sample to capture the whole of the EM I population. The desirability of having a large EM I sample, thereby permitting comparative analysis using multivariate statistical techniques, became more obvious as the details of the sampling design were finalized. In the end, 164 EM Is representing 73 percent of the total cohort were sent questionnaires. One hundred and forty-three of these officials returned surveys, providing a sample return rate of 87 percent.

Additional comments are in order concerning the EM I sample and return rate. Although there were roughly 225 officials serving at the EM I level in the Government of Alberta, only sixty-two met the criteria of the ADM operational definition: this is, 28 percent qualify as ADMs. Forty-four of the EM I respondents meet the ADM operational criteria, thereby representing 71 percent of the EM I population operationally defined as ADMs. This respondent sample is admittedly a smaller percentage of the population than those representing EM IIs and deputies but the percentage is nonetheless high by most accepted standards. Ninety-nine EM Is responding to the questionnaire serve at the third or fourth tiers in departmental hierarchies. Out of a total population of 165 officials serving at these levels, the respondent cohort represents 60 percent. Therefore, while the EM I respondent cohort does not enjoy the same rate of return as the deputy and EM II groups, there is nonetheless a fair representation from the EM Is.

Respondents are located in all departments and, with some exceptions, the three top organizational levels are represented in most departments. In rare cases, the study captured fourth level respondents. The response rate is high, which is surprising since respondents were asked to complete a seventeen page questionnaire comprising over 200 data and information items. They completed their questionnaires on average in thirty to forty-five minutes.

Considerable effort was expended to extract as many returns as possible. Widespread deputy minister support for the project encouraged responses. However, a host of other methods were used to elicit responses. Mindful of the aesthetics of the layout, care was taken to design a questionnaire which could be easily read and interpreted. Statistics Canada literature was consulted in devising the instrument. Most deputy ministers alerted staff that they would be receiving questionnaires. In a number of cases, deputy ministers were sent the questionnaires and their office staff circulated

sealed envelopes to the appropriate executive officials. Completed questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher. Two reminder notices were sent to recalcitrant officials, and personal phone calls were made in a number of cases if questionnaires were not received. Respondents were asked if they wished a summary report of findings,⁵ an offer which was made as an indication of good faith and as an incentive to elicit returns. A "whip system" was selectively brought to bear. The researcher's previously established personal contacts with several deputy ministers were useful in eliciting their support in phoning colleagues who had not replied. Other deputies coaxed their executive officials to complete the questionnaire. It is likely that if the researcher had not had previous personal contacts with various senior officials the response rate would have been lower. At the same time, the level of response is also attributable to the interest that the respondents took in the project.

Coincidentally, the survey was launched during the same week as a study being conducted by Professor Mansour Javidan of the University of Alberta's Faculty of Business. Dr. Javidan's study focused on management style and relations within the managerial and executive ranks of the Government of Alberta and canvassed the entire executive and senior management ranks. Javidan had the official backing of the Personnel Administration Office, and of the cabinet, which provided funding for his research. Anecdotal accounts from respondents and contacts suggest that a "hotelling" effect may have come into play, since after years of academic neglect two surveys were being conducted during the very same week. Some respondents undoubtedly confused the two studies. The contrast between the studies may have benefited the ADM study, in that a number of questions in the Javidan study were reported by officials as being much too

⁵ Eighty-seven percent of the respondents replied that they would be interested in receiving a summary report. The report was circulated in May 1990 shortly before the round of personal interviews began.

sensitive. Javidan asked for candid appraisals of the management styles of respondents' superiors. His response rate was approximately 55 percent.

Portions of the collected data were subjected to tests to determine the internal consistency, and therefore the accuracy, of responses. The tests involved simple calculations to detect if responses to questions such as those on career history were plausible. Questions relating to public and private sector work experience appeared to present some respondents with difficulties and so rudimentary routines were developed to detect suspicious replies. In some instances data were altered when the nature of the discrepancies were obvious. In other cases participants were contacted for clarification. Extensive personal interviews provided additional opportunities for follow-ups.

Statistical manipulations appearing in this study were performed on the StatsView II statistical package, a program developed to operate on the Macintosh II family of computers.⁶

Interviews

Three types of interviews were conducted: follow-ups with respondents, interviews with senior officials to acquire a more precise understanding of the operating systems of the government and the Alberta public service, and interviews with senior officials and former political and administrative personnel which were conducted to understand better the political-administrative context of senior administration in the provincial government.

Sixty-one interviews were conducted primarily during the spring and summer months of 1991. Approximately one-third of the interviews were on a face-to-face basis, with the remainder conducted over the telephone. Limitations of time and resources

⁶ Daniel S. Feldman Jr., Rich Hoffman, Jim Gagnon, and Joe Simpson, *StatView II: The Solution for Data Analysis and Presentation Graphics* (Berkeley Ca.: Abacus Concepts, 1987).

necessitated the use of telephone interviews. The time senior officials have to participate in this type of study is not only limited, it is by no means entirely their own. Deputy ministers, in particular, are at the beck and call of events and their superiors. Although assistant deputies may have more flexible schedules, numerous appointments had to be rescheduled.

Interviews were recorded using a tape recorder. The subject's willingness to be quoted was established first as one of the ground rules of the interview. Unless the interviewee wanted to be quoted the person was told that answers would be phrased in a manner to protect the commentator's anonymity. When a particular quote had an extra measure of pertinence or significance, a promise was made to clear it with the person being quoted. In some cases permission to quote segments was requested at the time of the interview, while in others permission was sought later. Interviewees were alerted that they were being taped and that if they wanted to speak off tape at any time, they could do so. This option was used as much during the face-to-face sessions as during the telephone interviews.

The taped segments of the interviews have been transcribed. Transcripts have been rendered on hard copy and microcomputer file. The hard copy transcript runs over 750 single-spaced pages.

Follow-up Interviews

Since there are limits to the type of question which can be asked through a formal survey instrument, personal interviews were conducted to explore in depth the role of the ADM and relationships with other system actors. Time and a lack of financial resources prevented the interviewing of all of the assistant deputy ministers, so a strategy was developed to ensure there was a measure of representativeness. The operationally defined ADM cohort was the logical population from which to draw interviewees. Not only was it

likely this group would be the most responsive to being interviewed, it was also possible to develop background material from returned questionnaires to prepare for interviews , and to corroborate interview information with data acquired from the survey. One hundred and four officials representing 83 percent of all Government of Alberta officials defined as ADMs returned the questionnaire. This cohort formed the population for an interview sample.

It was clear from the survey results that while operationally defined ADMs had much in common, they also differed in what they did and with whom they frequently related. Therefore a rational basis was required for dividing the population into cohorts. A review of the survey data helped in developing a sampling matrix defined by two functional variables thought to be important determinants of role: function of position for the horizontal axis, and function of department for the vertical axis. Horizontal axis value categories corresponded to types of administrative positions: planning and policy, administration and operational support, and program delivery. The categories are commonly used in the Government of Alberta and are referred to in the management literature. Vertical axis value categories typified the function of the departmental organization in which a respondent was employed: Public Security and External Relations; Public Works, Communications and Transportation; Coordination and Services for Government; Conservation, Development and Promotion of Physical (& Economic) Resources; and Protection and Development of Human Resources. The categories were developed by J. E. Hodgetts in his work on the history of the federal public service.⁷

⁷ See J. E. Hodgetts, *The Canadian Public Service: A Physiology of Government 1867-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 87-111.

To prepare for a random selection of interview candidates all 104 operationally defined ADMs comprising the population of prospective interviewees were categorized using the scheme. Categorizing the population provided a numerical basis for establishing the appropriate number for each of the fifteen sampling matrix cells.⁸ Parenthetically, it should be added that Hodgetts admits his scheme is problematic in that some departments defy easy classification given multiple functional foci. This problem also became apparent when attempting to classify officers within the population, as some Government of Alberta departments also are characterized by an omnibus functional focus. A decision rule was employed whereby organization functional classifications were rendered with reference to the function of the department unless it was clear that the function of the division in which the incumbent served was at odds with the departmental classification. In these cases the organizational functional classification was referenced at the divisional or branch level.

The researcher began the first phase of candidate selection by literally pulling fifty participant survey identification code numbers out of a hat until all cells were invested with an appropriate complement of officials. After this routine was completed, the sample was analyzed to determine whether all departments were represented in the sample—a

⁸ The precise loading of the cells is as follows: Cell No. 1, Policy and Planning/Public Security and External Affairs—n = 2; Cell No. 2, Policy and Planning/Public Works, Communication and Transportation—n = 2; Cell No. 3, Policy and Planning/Coordination and Services for Government—n = 1; Cell No. 4, Policy and Planning/Conservation, Development and Promotion of Physical Resources—n = 3; Cell No. 5, Policy and Planning/Protection and Development of Human Resources—n = 4; Cell No. 6, Administrative and Operational Support/Public Security and External Affairs—n = 2; Cell No. 7, Administrative and Operational Support/Public Works, Communication and Transportation—n = 4; Cell No. 8, Administrative and Operational Support/Coordination and Services for Government—n = 2; Cell No. 9, Administrative and Operational Support/Conservation, Development and Promotion of Physical Resources—n = 3; Cell No. 10, Administrative and Operational Support/Protection and Development of Human Resources—n = 5; Cell No. 11, Program Delivery/Protection Services and External Affairs—n = 5; Cell No. 12, Program Delivery/Public Works, Communication and Transportation—n = 1; Cell No. 13, Program Delivery/Coordination and Services for Government—n = 2; Cell No. 14, Program Delivery/Conservation, Development and Promotion of Physical Resources—n = 7; Cell No. 15, Program Delivery/Protection and Development of Human Resources—n = 7.

few substitutions were made by choosing an alternative in non-random fashion. The sample was also analyzed to determine whether a reasonable mix existed with respect to length of service, extra-organizational experience, and gender. These criteria were satisfied through randomly selecting the sample.

Following the protocol established by the deputy minister of Executive Council, deputy ministers of every department were contacted and permission was sought to conduct interviews within departments. All deputies readily agreed to have their staff interviewed and several contacted the personnel in advance of the interview call to encourage participation. All of the ADMs contacted agreed to participate in the study.

During this phase it was discovered that in a number of cases the individuals who had been selected as interview candidates had retired, resigned from the public service, or were no longer in their former positions. These cases were handled somewhat differently, depending on circumstances. In two cases former ADMs had been promoted to deputy positions during the year-long interval between survey administration and interviews. These officials remained on the interview list even though they were no longer ADMs, since they could provide important perspectives on differences between ADM and deputy level positions. Officials who had quit the Alberta Public Service for other employment were replaced on the sampling list by those who had assumed their positions. In four instances this meant that no background information could be developed before the interview. Officials who had recently retired were not substituted on the list, as it was felt that since they had served for many years in the Alberta Public Service, they could offer an important perspective on the historical development of the administration. In some instances officials had moved laterally within their departments since the administration of the questionnaire or had moved across departments. These officials were also retained

on the sampling list, as they could offer important perspectives on differences in positions and departments.

Despite the various substitutions the stratified character of the sample remained reasonably intact and the important *a priori* requisites of departmental representation and general functional representation were met.

On average, face-to-face and telephone interviews took an hour and fifteen minutes to complete. Six general "lines" of inquiry were defined, three of which included "must ask" questions. These three lines comprised inquiries about (1) the character of the incumbent's position, (2) the policy process in the department and government, and (3) the respondent's interactions with other actors, in particular the minister and the minister's office, the deputy, interest groups, and departmental and extra-departmental peers. Questions in the remaining three lines were asked as time and opportunity permitted. These secondary lines of inquiry included questions about (4) the interviewee's professional self-identification, (5) coordination and control issues and the special role of the ADM within the Government of Alberta's coordination and control regime, and (6) the individual's choice of career and career advancement.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the specifics of some questions being refined and the focus of the interview altered over time with reference to the body of information and ideas collected. In the majority of cases the first question asked required officials simply to state what they did in their current positions. Responses often provided an "overture" to points covered during the remainder of the interview. All interviews were conducted privately one-on-one. The subjects were candid, although the degree of candidness differed with the individual.

Operating System Interviews

A limited number of interviews and consultations were conducted to enhance the researcher's understanding of the policy development, personnel administration, and financial administration machinery of the Alberta government. These inquiries were necessary because little literature exists on such matters. Officials interviewed include the deputy provincial treasurer, the public service commissioner, the chief legislative counsel, the clerk of the legislative assembly, and the deputy secretary to cabinet. In addition to these special interviews, sections of interviews with ADMs and several senior deputy ministers were devoted to obtaining a better understanding of the government operating systems. In the course of these interviews former Treasury and Personnel Administration Office officials as well as senior officials of the Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs department were contacted. The fruits of these discussions are cited in commentary dealing with the machinery of government and the administrative context of the assistant deputy minister's position.

Interviews on the Political-Administrative Context

Portions of the operating system interviews were devoted to obtaining an historical perspective on the development of the current financial, policy, and administrative systems and structures. An administrative history, even one only broadly construed, is necessary in order to understand the operating context of the assistant deputy minister. Interviews with ADMs, deputies, and a number of other officials were devoted to obtaining information about the evolution of the systems in place. Special interviews were also conducted with a former deputy provincial treasurer, a former secretary to the cabinet committees who served under Peter Lougheed, Premier Harry Strom's executive assistant, the deputy clerk of the Legislative Assembly during the later years of the Social Credit government, and the Honorable Raymond Speaker. Mr.

Speaker is a parliamentarian distinguished by his continued service in the Alberta Legislature from 1963 to 1991, his role as the leader of an opposition party, and his unique position as one who has served as a minister in both the Social Credit and Conservative cabinets.

Archival and Library Record Research

In the absence of a literature focusing on Alberta provincial public administration it was necessary to seek original material to corroborate information obtained from interviews, and to acquire additional data and information to construct a rudimentary contemporary administrative history. Three supplementary lines of research were initiated: an inquiry into the names and in-service career movements of political and senior administrative personnel, the creation of computer files showing executive level organization charts for government departments from 1960 to 1989, and an inquiry into departmental staff complements.

The first inquiry involved assembling a record of ministers, ministerial executive assistants, deputy ministers, and second and third tier administrative officials serving the regular departments from 1960 to 1989. Government telephone directories and annual department reports were consulted to assemble the record on a microcomputer database. Constructing departmental organization charts—the second line of inquiry—became a necessary element of the first exercise, as it was not possible to ascertain from the phone book and department report records the level (tier) at which many officials served.

There were a number of problems with compiling a 1960–1989 record of officials. There is adequate archival data on the top three levels of administration from 1973 onwards. The record from 1960 to 1969 is less complete but generally interpretable insofar as deputy ministers and the second level of administrators are concerned. Data from known sources is mysteriously spotty between 1969 and 1971. While it has been

possible to obtain the names of deputy ministers for this period, a complete record has not been assembled for second tier officials or their subordinates. The lacuna is unfortunate, as a compelling question concerns the fate of higher officials of the Social Credit regime in the wake of the September 1971 Tory victory.

Identifying those who populate ministerial executive assistant positions is facilitated by the annual Government of Alberta RITE directory and its predecessor during the first Tory administration years, which have consistently listed senior ministerial office staff. This was not a consistent practice during the Social Credit administration, in part because ministerial staff only began to be hired in any numbers during the last three years of the regime and, as mentioned above, the record is incomplete for this brief period. Although the listing of Tory executive assistants can be regarded as definitive, complete accounts of department personnel and the organizational structure generated by the Personnel Administration Office from its personnel database indicate that ministerial offices often carry larger complements than indicated in the phone book.

With the exception of the 1969–1971 period a reasonably complete account is constructed of personnel reporting to the deputy ministers. The same cannot be said about third level officials. This problem is particularly manifest during the Social Credit years when no government-wide compendium of departmental organization charts was published. Various departments published organization charts in annual reports and these have proved to be invaluable sources. Lougheed's administration changed this with the periodic publication of organization chart compendiums detailing the top three to four levels of all government departments, bureaus, and agencies. Still, the record during the Lougheed years is not always complete and a certain amount of deduction had to suffice

in constructing a complete record of organization charts so that third tier officials could be identified.

The inability to construct a complete record of all officials serving in the first three levels of the bureaucracy from 1960 to 1989 has prevented analysis of personnel information being taken to the next logical step—the development of a statistical database to analyze career paths—as originally intended. Nevertheless, the personnel database comprising thousands of entries is of considerable value to the study. It provides a complete record of ministers and deputy ministers as well as a reasonably complete list of second tier administrative officials and senior staffers in Tory ministerial offices.

Yearly departmental organization charts, which were compiled as aids in the classification of officials, while not complete, provide a basis for investigating the evolving organizational structures of provincial departments. The charts make it possible to portray such things as deputy ministers' spans of control and to contemplate the logic of organizational design reflected in departmental structures. One time-referenced development revealed through this analysis is the proliferation of "staff" and policy organizations within departments. The latter item is rendered impressionistically but is still of interest and significance. If nothing else, an analysis of changes in organizational design points to the fact that two forces seem always to be at work: natural evolutionary ones and those that are impelled by purposeful intervention.

Staff complement research is based on the annual reports of the Public Service Commissioner which record staff levels falling under the aegis of the merit system. These data provide a measure of the general pattern of personnel growth and decline during the period, and a more detailed accounting of growth in departments and functional groupings of departments.

**APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

IDENTIFICATION CODE			
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INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Your thoughtful responses to all questions are requested. The questions do not require outside research. Pre-tests of the questionnaire show that it can be completed in approximately 30 minutes.

All information you provide will be treated confidentially. The only identification between yourself and the completed questionnaire is the code number printed in the box on the upper right hand corner of this page. No one except the principal researcher will be able to link a respondent's name to a completed questionnaire.

A return-addressed envelope is enclosed for your use. Please complete the questionnaire by October 13, 1989 and return to:

Edward C. LeSage Jr.
Associate Professor and Director
Government Studies, Faculty of Extension
Ring House #2, University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2E2

SECTION 1 -- INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Data collected in this section will be used to develop statistical profiles of job-related interaction patterns occurring between respondents and others.

RECORD A NUMBER ESTIMATE AND CIRCLE A "TIME FRAME" (i.e. daily, weekly, monthly, yearly) WHICH, WHEN COMBINED, BEST DESCRIBE THE FREQUENCY OF YOUR INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS. It is assumed that interactions involve some form of two-way communication.

WHERE YOU DO NOT INTERACT, PLEASE INDICATE BY PLACING "NA" IN THE SPACE RESERVED FOR THE NUMBER ESTIMATE.

Government of Alberta Public Service Officials

On average I interact with:

[CIRCLE ONE]

MY DEPUTY MINISTER.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	001
MY ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER(S).....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	002
TREASURY DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	003
PAO DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	004
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OFFICIALS.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	005
FIGA OFFICIALS	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	006
OTHERS AT MY RANK IN THE DEPARTMENT .(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	007
PEERS IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	008

Politicians or Their Offices

On average I interact with:

[CIRCLE ONE]

THE PREMIER	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	009
MY MINISTER	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	010
MY MINISTER'S OFFICE	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	011
OTHER MINISTERS	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	012
OTHER MINISTERS' OFFICES	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	013
GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	014
OPPOSITION PARTY MLAs.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	015
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	016
CAUCUS COMMITTEES	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	017
FEDERAL MPs OR SENATORS.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	018
LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLITICIANS	() times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	019

Extra-organizational Officials

On average, I communicate or otherwise interact with:

[CIRCLE ONE]

THE OMBUDSMAN.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	020
MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY (i.e., judges)..(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	021
OFFICIALS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT .(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	022
OFFICIALS OF OTHER PROVINCIAL GOV'TS..(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	023
LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	024
ASSOCIATIONS OR INTEREST GROUPS(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	025
MEMBERS OF MY PRINCIPAL PROFESSION...(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	026
CEOs, PRIVATE FIRMS.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	027
MANAGERS, PRIVATE FIRMS.....(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	028
LABOUR (extra-governmental)(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	029
PRIVATE CITIZENS(	) times: (daily) (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)	030

PROCEED TO NEXT SECTION...

SECTION 2 -- IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTION

Data collected in this section will be used to develop statistical profiles of job-related interaction patterns -- this time focussing on the relative importance of relationships.

VERY IMPORTANT interactions are those which you must engage if you are to successfully perform your job. NOT IMPORTANT interactions have no bearing on the successful performance of your job.

CHECK (✓) THE BOX THAT *BEST* DESCRIBES THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTIONS WITH SPECIFIED OTHERS. IF YOU DO NOT INTERACT, OR THE ITEM IS NOT APPLICABLE, CHECK THE "NA" BOX.

Government of Alberta Public Service Officials

My deputy minister	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	031
My assistant deputy minister(s)	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	032
Treasury department officials	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	033
PAO departmental officials	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	034
Executive Council officials	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	035
FIGA officials	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	036
Others at my rank in the department	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	037
Peers in other departments	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	038

Politicians or Their Offices

The premier	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	039
My minister	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	040

Politicians or Their Offices (continued)

My minister's office	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	041
Other ministers	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	042
Other minister's offices	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	043
Government backbenchers	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	044
Opposition party MLAs	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	045
Legislative assembly committees	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	046
Caucus committees	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	047
Federal MPs or senators	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	048
Local government politicians	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	049

Extra-organizational Officials

The Ombudsman	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	050
Members of the judiciary	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	051
Officials of the Federal Government	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	052
Officials of other provincial governments	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	053
Local government officials	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	054
Associations or interest groups	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	055

Extra-organizational Officials (continued)

Members of my principal profession	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	056
CEOs, private firms	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	057
Managers, private firms	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	058
Labour representatives (extra-governmental)	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	059
Private Citizens	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA	060

PROCEED TO NEXT SECTION...

SECTION 3 -- SELECTED JOB TASKS

Data collected in this section will be used to develop scales measuring different managerial and administrative orientations.

Performance of VERY IMPORTANT tasks is essential if you are to successfully perform your job. NOT IMPORTANT tasks are unessential in this regard. Consider yourself performing a task if you are the official principally responsible for seeing that it is completed.

CHECK (✓) THE BOX THAT *BEST* DESCRIBES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TASK.

Preparing Replies and Briefing Materials

Prepare responses to questions/ issues raised in the legislature	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 061
Prepare replies to questions/ queries directed to the minister	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 062
Prepare replies to questions/ queries directed to the deputy minister	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 063
Prepare briefing notes for the minister	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 064
Prepare briefing notes for the deputy minister	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 065

Preparing Long Range Plans and Evaluating Programs

Develop strategies to implement departmental policies	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 066
Assist subordinate managers in setting long-range plans, goals and objectives	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 067
Review or approve subordinates' operational goals and objectives	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 068
Review project/program progress reports	→	NOT IMPORTANT	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 069

5 of/de 5

PM-1 3½"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
NBS 1010a ANSI/ISO #2 EQUIVALENT

PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS

Consulting and Providing Advice

Assess the long-range direction of governmental policy in my area of responsibility	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 070
Prepare information on the trends and issues which may lead to legislative questions	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 071
Consult with or provide advice to private industry	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 072
Consult with or provide advice to other Government of Alberta agencies	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 073
Consult with or provide advice to associations or interest groups	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 074
Give advice or answer questions at cabinet, caucus or legislative committees	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 075

Assisting Superiors

Develop insight into the views and direction of the minister	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 076
Develop insight into the views and direction of the deputy minister	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 077
Summarize information for the minister	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 078
Summarize information for the deputy minister	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 079
Review and edit replies to ministerial inquiries	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 080

Preparing Policy and Legislation Documents

Prepare reports or discussion papers on trends and issues	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 081
Prepare proposals for draft legislation	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 082
Prepare inputs to draft legislation, major government statements and cabinet documents	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 083
Prepare cabinet documents	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 084

Managing Organizational Resources

Determine the organizational structure required to meet departmental goals and objectives	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 085
Plan and implement organizational changes	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 086
Advise other departments on technical or operational matters in area of expertise	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 087
Allocate financial resources to projects, capital expenditures	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 088
Approve requests for management training and development	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 089

Managing Organizational Finances and Budgets

Investigate financial variances (in a managerial rather than an accounting and control sense)	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 090
Authorize the transfer of funds to other units or agencies	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 091
Prepare and defend budgets	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 092
Determine areas of budgets which should be reduced/cut	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 093
Identify requirements for capital budgets	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 094

Planning Programs and Services

Review or approve requests for feasibility studies	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 095
Develop strategies for the introduction of programs/ services or changes to them	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 096
Prepare strategic plans or impact statements	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 097
Determine the need to change programs to meet client demands, resource constraints, new policies	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 098
Approve proposals for new, or changes to, program services	☐ NOT IMPORTANT ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ VERY IMPORTANT	☐ NA 099

PROCEED TO NEXT SECTION...

SECTION 4 -- CAREER HISTORY & PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Career history data will be used to explore economic sector and interorganizational mobility, and professional career paths.

WHERE YOU DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER, RECORD "DK". WHERE THE QUERY IS NOT APPLICABLE, RECORD "NA".

Career History

01. Year entered labour force as a full-time employee?.....19 100

02. Number of years that you have worked in any of the private, profit sector industries listed below:

YEARS

<input type="text"/>	Transportation, Storage, Communication, and Utilities	101
<input type="text"/>	Agriculture	102
<input type="text"/>	Fishing, Trapping, Logging, and Forestry.....	103
<input type="text"/>	Mines, Quarries, and Oil Wells.....	104
<input type="text"/>	Manufacturing	105
<input type="text"/>	Construction	106
<input type="text"/>	Wholesale and Retail Trade	107
<input type="text"/>	Finance and Insurance	108
<input type="text"/>	Real Estate and Business Services	109
<input type="text"/>	Health, Social, and Education Services (private sector only)	110
<input type="text"/>	Other [please specify];	111

03. Industry in which employed immediately prior to assuming present position?:

..... 112

04. Number of years worked in the public and NFP (i.e., not-for-profit) organizations listed below:

YEARS		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Provincial governments other than Alberta's..... 113
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Federal government (other than military or police)..... 114
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Local government (other than school, health, uniformed civilian) 115
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Public health (e.g., hospitals, health units, clinics) 116
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Elementary or secondary education 117
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Institution of higher learning (college or university) 118
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Public enterprise..... 119
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Not-for-profit organization (non-governmental)..... 120
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Uniformed military service..... 121
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Uniformed civilian service 122
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Foreign government..... 123
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Other [please specify]:_____ 124

05. Record in chronological order the name of each Government of Alberta department/agency in which you have worked and the number of years employed within. (If more than five departments, continue list on opposite page.)

	YEARS
(a) department 1: _____	<input type="text"/> 125
(b) department 2: _____	<input type="text"/> 126
(c) department 3: _____	<input type="text"/> 127
(d) department 4: _____	<input type="text"/> 128
(e) department 5: _____	<input type="text"/> 129

06. Position held immediately prior to assuming present position (title and organization)?:

_____ 130

07. Number of years employed in present position?..... 131
08. Number of position moves made:
- (a) within the Alberta Public Service?..... 132
- (b) within your present department? 133
09. Number of years in management (all sectors -- e.g., private, public)?..... 134
10. Number of years in public management? 135
11. Number of management positions held over career (all sectors)? 136
12. Number of years at Executive Management I-II levels or equivalent?..... 137
13. Number of years at Executive Management I-II levels in public sector?..... 138
14. Number of positions at Executive Management I-II levels (all sectors)?..... 139
15. Number of positions at Executive Management I-II level in public sector?.. 140
16. Number of years as a chief executive officer (all sectors)? 141
17. Number of years as a deputy minister? 142
18. Number of years as a Government of Alberta deputy minister? 143
19. Number of positions held at deputy minister level in public sector?..... 144
20. Number of staff directly reporting to you? 145
21. Number of staff employed within the organization you administer? 146
22. Number of program areas under your administration 147
23. 1988-89 operational budget of organization you administer? (exclude transfer payments and revolving funds)
- \$ 0 0 148
24. Number of times you have left the employ of the Government of Alberta? . 149
25. Number of months taken off from work for purposes of full-time studies?.. 150

Personal Background

Personal background data will be used to explore social representativeness, and administrative generalist/specialist orientations.

WHERE YOU DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER, RECORD "DK". WHERE THE QUERY IS NOT APPLICABLE, RECORD "NA".

26. Year of birth?.....19 151
27. Gender?.....
☐ Male
☐ Female 152
28. Born in Canada?
☐ Yes
☐ No 153
- 28.a. If yes, in what province?:..... 154
- 28.b. If no, in what country?:..... 155
29. Year first resided permanently in Canada?.....19 156
30. Born Canadian citizen?.....
☐ Yes
☐ No 157
31. First year of permanent residence in Alberta?19 158
32. Number of years as permanent resident of Alberta?..... 159
33. Father's country of birth?:..... 160
34. Mother's country of birth?:..... 161
35. Father's ethnic background?:..... 162
36. Mother's ethnic background?:..... 163

37. Father's principal occupation?: _____ 164

38. Mother's principal occupation?: _____ 165

39. Report your *father's formal education* by checking the appropriate box(es) for each section (a)-(d) below.

<p>(a) High School Diploma</p> <p>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know</p>	<p>(c) Full Years of Post-Secondary Education</p> <p>☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6+</p> <p>☐ Don't Know</p>
166	170
<p>(b) Institutions Attended</p> <p>☐ None ☐ Don't Know</p> <p>☐ University</p> <p>☐ Polytechnical school</p> <p>☐ Community College</p> <p>☐ Nursing School</p> <p>☐ Teacher's College</p> <p>☐ Other (please specify)</p> <p>: _____</p>	<p>(d) Credentials Earned</p> <p>☐ None ☐ Don't Know</p> <p>☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate/Citation</p> <p>☐ Bachelor's</p> <p>☐ Master's</p> <p>☐ Doctoral</p> <p>☐ Other (please specify)</p> <p>: _____</p>
167-169	171-173

40. Report your *mother's formal education* by checking the appropriate box(es) for each section (a)-(d) below.

<p>(a) High School Diploma</p> <p>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know</p>	<p>(c) Full Years of Post-Secondary Education</p> <p>☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6+</p> <p>☐ Don't Know</p>
174	178
<p>(b) Institutions Attended</p> <p>☐ None ☐ Don't Know</p> <p>☐ University</p> <p>☐ Polytechnical school</p> <p>☐ Community College</p> <p>☐ Nursing School</p> <p>☐ Teacher's College</p> <p>☐ Other (please specify)</p> <p>: _____</p>	<p>(d) Credentials Earned</p> <p>☐ None ☐ Don't Know</p> <p>☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate/Citation</p> <p>☐ Bachelor's</p> <p>☐ Master's</p> <p>☐ Doctoral</p> <p>☐ Other (please specify)</p> <p>: _____</p>
175-177	179-181

41. Report *your formal education* by checking the appropriate box(es) for each section (a)-(d) below.

<p>(a) High School Diploma</p> <p>☐ Yes ☐ No</p> <p style="text-align: right;">182</p>	<p>(c) Full Years of Post-Secondary Education</p> <p>☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6+</p> <p style="text-align: right;">186</p>
<p>(b) Institutions Attended</p> <p>☐ None</p> <p>☐ University</p> <p>☐ Polytechnical school</p> <p>☐ Community College</p> <p>☐ Nursing School</p> <p>☐ Teacher's College</p> <p>☐ Other (please specify)</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">183-185</p>	<p>(d) Credentials Earned</p> <p>☐ None</p> <p>☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate/Citation</p> <p>☐ Bachelor's</p> <p>☐ Master's</p> <p>☐ Doctoral</p> <p>☐ Other (please specify)</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">187-189</p>

42. Record in the spaces provided below *each professional designation you have earned* in which the granting authority is other than an accredited institution of higher learning. (e.g., CA, CMA, RIA, P.Eng., etc.)

(a) designation 1: _____ 190

(b) designation 2: _____ 191

(c) designation 3: _____ 192

43. What do you regard as your principal profession?: _____ 193

44. Indicate the *area of academic concentration* for the academic credentials that you hold: [Consult the box titled "AREA OF ACADEMIC CONCENTRATION" on the page opposite for guidance]

(a) certificate or citation: _____ 194

(a) diploma: _____ 195

(b) bachelor's degree: _____ 196

(c) master's degree: _____ 197

(d) doctoral degree: _____ 198

(e) other [specify]: _____ 199

45. Record the *university attended* for each of the academic credentials that you hold:

- (a) certificate or citation: _____ 200
 (b) diploma: _____ 201
 (c) bachelor's degree: _____ 202
 (d) master's degree: _____ 203
 (e) doctoral degree: _____ 204
 (f) other [specify]: _____ 205

46. Record name and sponsor of *senior management* or *executive develop programs* attended over the past 10 years which you have not recorded above.

- (a) program 1: _____ 206
 (b) program 2: _____ 207
 (c) program 3: _____ 208
 (d) program 4: _____ 209

47. I would like to receive a summary of selected survey findings..... ☐ Yes ☐ No 210

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT!

**PLEASE PLACE THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENCLOSED PRE-
 ADDRESSED ENVELOPE AND FORWARD TO GOVERNMENT STUDIES.**

APPENDIX C

DEFINITIONS OF JOB CHARACTERISTICS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF BEHAVIOUR EXPRESSIONS OF KEY JOB CHARACTERISTICS FOR FEDERAL ADM AND DIRECTOR GENERAL LEVEL OFFICIALS

A. CHARACTERISTICS THAT DO NOT CHANGE EXPRESSIONS ACROSS MANAGEMENT LEVELS

- JUDGEMENT:** Uses appropriate strategies to achieve objectives, considering the situation, the issues, and the persons involved. Reaches sound decisions and takes wise courses of action.
- INTEGRITY:** Takes actions that are congruent with what he/she says. Reliably delivers on promises and honours commitments. Demonstrates consistence in upholding the ethical and social norms of the organization in actions and decisions. Treats people fairly by maintaining consistent values and performance standards.
- SELF-CONFIDENCE:** Willing to state and defend ideas and convictions, while recognizing other options. Has confidence required to stand alone when this is the best course. Realistically trusts own talents.
- BEHAVIOURAL FLEXIBILITY:** Demonstrates sensitivity to the environment. Tolerates ambiguity, shifts priorities, changes style and responds with new approaches as needed to deal with the demands of changed conditions.
- INITIATIVE:** Actively and enthusiastically attempts to influence events. Seeks opportunities to originate action. Takes action beyond explicit requests and approaches work in an optimistic manner. A self-starter.
- PERSEVERANCE:** Stays with a plan of action or position until the desired objective is attained or no longer appropriate. Maintains a steady course with patience and weathers set-backs en route. Looks for ways to surmount obstacles.

B. CHARACTERISTICS DISTINGUISHED BY LEVEL OF OFFICIALDOM

- LEADERSHIP:** Attracting and mobilizing energies and talents to work towards a shared purpose in the best interests of the organization, the people comprising it, and the people it serves.

Assistant Deputy Minister—Creating vision/values

- Creates and instills a vision, a set of values, and an organizational climate in which goals can be achieved.
- Remains accessible to various stakeholders and shows a willingness to become directly and personally involved.

- Fosters innovation and adaptation to change.
- Ensures that employees are trained and developed to meet the short- and long-term needs of the organization.

Director General—Organizational influence

- Encourages constructive questioning of policies and practices and sponsors experimentation and innovation.
- Gains and sustains the interest and support of the management team for strategies which realize the vision and values of the organization.
- Facilitates and celebrates process.

THINKING SKILLS: Identifying, defining, and analyzing problems and situations using rational and intuitive processes that result in the drawing of accurate conclusions, the generation of viable solutions, and visualization of new potentials.

Assistant Deputy Minister—Extracting meaning

- Adds meaning to complex events and patterns of information by reducing phenomena to their fundamental concepts and basic objectives.
- Extracts from diverse sources of information vital principles that enrich understanding and provide a focus for the organization's activities.

Director General—Strategic perspective

- Grasps the meaning of trends and interrelationships between the organization and its environment and makes accurate prognoses of expected developments.
- Draws insights from the total pattern of facts and relationships, stepping back from everyday events.
- Conceives models to guide the development of practical long-term directions for policies, programs, and services.

ORGANIZATIONAL AWARENESS: Understanding, building, and using formal and informal systems and contacts in a complex organizational environment in order to get results.

Assistant Deputy Minister—Political acumen

- Gains cooperation from others through understanding of and sensitivity to the political and organizational culture.
- Balances conflicting demands from the political level, external interest groups, and the organization.

- Positions and reorients the organization to meet emerging trends and to achieve organizational and government objectives.

Director General—Building support

- Builds and maintains alliances and networks of clients, colleagues, and interest groups inside and outside of the organization to accomplish results.
- Establishes effective organizational structures to achieve strategic goals.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS: Interacting with others in ways that advance the work of the organization by developing respect, mutual understanding, and productive working relationships.

Assistant Deputy Minister—Interpersonal versatility

- Displays a sincere interest in relating to people from all walks of life.
- Adapts interpersonal style to diverse relationships with clients, senior executives in other organizations, politicians, and employees at all levels of the organization.
- Represents the organization with finesse and polish at high level and “grass roots” events.

Director General—Diplomacy

- Creates a favourable impression on initial contact that gains esteem and respect from people having differing backgrounds and viewpoints.
- Recognizes interdependencies, seeks common ground, and develops collegial long-term relationships.
- Advances the organization’s interests adroitly without arousing hostility.

COMMUNICATION: Shaping others’ understanding in ways which capture interest, inform, and gain support.

Assistant Deputy Minister—Instilling commitment

- Promotes open dialogue throughout the organization.
- Uses personal example, symbols, or other means to clearly and compellingly relate a future state and direction for the organization which generates enthusiasm and commitment at all levels.

Director General—Strategic communication

- Capitalizes on existing communication vehicles and creates new ones to ensure effective internal and external communication.

- Promotes the organization's messages, products, and services to other clients, higher level management, and subordinates in a purposeful and timely manner which gains and sustains their support.

ACTION Achieving expected results through the successful and timely
MANAGEMENT: completion of activities and delivery of products and services.

Assistant Deputy Minister—Sustaining action

- Directs the organization's activities in line with the government's plans and priorities.
- Sustains the organization's momentum towards accomplishing goals.
- Establishes and maintains effective accountability systems which review activities and goals against strategies.

Director General—Orchestration

- Ensures that all resources are employed effectively and redeployed when necessary.
- Develops and implements strategic plans which tie programs and services to broad policy objectives.
- Keeps activities and programs on track by clarifying objectives and providing feedback.

KNOWLEDGE: Knowledge of the Public Service environment, government systems and operational policies, and the programs and policies of one's own department.

Assistant Deputy Minister

- The government's priorities of the day.
- Current and emerging management issues.
- International and global issues of the day, current and emerging, which have an impact on or influence the organization.

Director General

- Role of government in a western industrialized society.
- Public perception and demands of the day and forecast issues.
- Economic factors of the day and forecast issues.
- Social, cultural, and political issues of the past, present, and future.

APPENDIX D

PROPOSITIONS AND COROLLARIES

Proposition 1: Functions Performed by ADMs ¹

ADMs perform important:

- (a) management functions in the major areas of leadership, decision-making, administration, and communication.**
- (b) policy formulation and advisory functions.**
- (c) corporate representation functions.**

Proposition 1/Corollary 1: Relative Significance of Policy and Administration Tasks

While both management- and policy-related tasks are of key importance to the ADM job, management tasks have greater significance.

Proposition 1/Corollary 2: The Hierarchical Effect

An official's placement within the organizational hierarchy affects the nature of tasks performed. Nominally, the higher an official's hierarchical station, the greater the job's strategic focus and intellectual abstraction, and the closer the official's ties to the centres of administrative and political power.

Proposition 1/Corollary 3: The Size Effect

ADM job orientations differ as a function of organizational size. ADMs managing larger organizations devote greater energies to:

- (a) dealing with the volume of issues, decisions, and activities generated in the organization.**
- (b) interacting with greater numbers of system actors.**
- (c) managing conflicts and frictions among system actors.**
- (d) managing through abstract control systems and through layers of intermediaries.**

Proposition 1/Corollary 4: Supervisory Style

The deputy minister's competence, abrasiveness, and expectations have a direct bearing on the ADM's task orientations.

¹ Alberta Personnel Administration Office. "Executive Profile" [undated mimeo.].

Proposition 1/Corollary 5: Effects of Policy Community Environment

ADMs exhibit different administrative behaviours when operating in different policy community environments.

Proposition 1/Corollary 6: The Effect of Departmental Function

ADMs differ in their interactions with other system actors as a consequence of the function of their employing department.

Proposition 2: Leadership—activities

In exercising leadership, ADMs assess subordinates' capacities, improve subordinates' potential through training and development assignments, delegate work, and negotiate with system actors to attain organizational objectives.

Proposition 2/Corollary 1: Leadership as Program Direction Setting

ADMs have greater responsibilities than subordinate executive managers in setting program direction.

Proposition 2/Corollary 2: Limited Visionary Leadership

Creating and instilling a vision, a set of values, and an organizational climate in which goals can be achieved is not a central feature of the Alberta ADM job.

Proposition 2/Corollary 3: Incremental Leadership

Organizational leadership exercised by ADMs involves:

- (a) positioning and reorienting the organization to meet emerging trends, and to achieve organizational and governmental objectives.
- (b) directing the organization's activities to align the government's plans and priorities.
- (c) sustaining the organization's momentum towards accomplishing goals.
- (d) gaining and sustaining the interest and support of the subordinate executive management team for strategies which realize the vision and values of the organization.

Proposition 2/Corollary 4: Trust and Confidence

An essential task of ADM organizational leadership is to engender personal trust in the ADM and his or her judgement among members of the divisional management team and department, and among others with whom the official must work closely.

Proposition 2/Corollary 5: Framing the Divisional Management Team

ADMs are limited in their ability to frame a management team to their liking, as they must work within restrictions of personnel administration legislation and regulations.

Proposition 3: Leadership—attributes

As organizational leaders, ADMs exhibit flexibility, interpersonal sensitivity, initiative, tolerance to stress, and sensitivity to public and governmental needs.

Proposition 3/Corollary 1: Judgement

ADMs exercise an “extra quotient” of judgement pertaining to organizational and extra-organizational matters which distinguishes them from subordinate executive managers.

Proposition 3/Corollary 2: Executive Management as a Group Process

Executive management is a group process that requires ADMs to work closely with others.

Proposition 3/Corollary 3: Substantive Knowledge

Command of substantive technical knowledge in the policy and administrative areas over which ADMs have responsibility is essential to competent job performance.

Proposition 4: Administration

ADMs plan, organize, delegate, and control the administration of their organization. Controlling entails the effective use of administrative controls for evaluation, auditing, and monitoring.

Proposition 4/Corollary 1: Long-Range Plans

ADMs formulate long-range plans, whereas subordinate executive managers formulate medium-range plans.

Proposition 4/Corollary 2: Yearly Performance Objectives

Executive managers reporting to ADMs formulate yearly program performance objectives, whereas ADMs approve them.

Proposition 4/Corollary 3: Assessing Program Effectiveness

ADM responsibilities for assessing program effectiveness are significantly greater than those of subordinate executive managers. To fulfill these responsibilities ADMs establish and maintain accountability systems which review activities and goals relative to strategies.

Proposition 4/Corollary 4: ADMs as Consumers of Ideas and Proposals

ADMs have little time to produce documents personally, research matters, and deliberate. They are largely consumers of documents, research findings, and proposals generated elsewhere in the organization.

Proposition 4/Corollary 5: Different Administrative Foci

ADMs differ in the importance they place on the practice of administration relative to policy advising and managing external relationships.

Proposition 5: Communication

The ability to communicate effectively is the most significant skill ADMs possess, as they communicate with many system actors in the normal course of their work.

Proposition 5/Corollary 2: Essential Communication Tasks

Alberta ADMs:

- (a) capitalize on existing communication vehicles and create new ones to ensure effective internal and external communication.
- (b) promote the organization's messages, products, and services to other clients, higher level management, and subordinates in a purposeful and timely manner which gains and sustains their support.

Proposition 5/Corollary 3: Subordinates as Principal Agents of External Liaison

ADMs supervise subordinate executive managers who build and maintain alliances and networks of clients, colleagues, and interest groups inside and outside the organization.

Proposition 5/Corollary 4: ADM as Arbiter of Conflicts

ADMs actively manage organizational and extra-organizational conflicts to limit the deputy's burden.

Proposition 5/Corollary 5: Principal Liaison Orientations

ADMs are differentiated on liaison orientation dimensions:

- downward into their line organization.
- upward toward the administrative and political centres of government.
- horizontally and outward toward officials in departments that are not central agencies.

- toward extra-organizational constituents.

Proposition 6: Policy Formulation

ADMs formulate policy proposals.

Proposition 6/Corollary 1: Offering Policy Advice

Advising the political executive, the minister, and the deputy minister is an important feature of the ADM job.

Proposition 6/Corollary 2: Political Content

When deputy ministers buffer ADMs and subordinate officials from the political domain, the content of ADM advice to the deputy minister and minister is preponderantly administrative in character.

Proposition 6/Corollary 3: Deputy as Gatekeeper of Ministerial Access

ADM contact with the minister and other members of the political executive is controlled by the deputy minister.

Proposition 6/Corollary 4: Principal Policy Role Foci

Within the ADM cohort, there is a range of policy role orientations which are typified by Comparative Elite Project images I–IV. Among these images, I and II are more prevalent than III and IV.

Proposition 6/Corollary 6: ADM as Gatekeeper for Divisional Policy Advice

Subordinate manager policy recommendations and counseling intended for the deputy minister and higher officialdom are controlled by ADMs.

Proposition 7: Classification Distinctions within ADM Ranks

Operationally defined ADMs possessing different PAO executive management classification designations do not fundamentally differ in the requirements and performance of work.

Proposition 8: Corporate Responsibilities

ADMs possess corporate responsibilities that extend beyond their immediate responsibilities to manage their line organization.

Proposition 8/Corollary 1: The Public Good and Corporate Responsibilities

Although ADMs possess important “corporate” responsibilities, they do not involve balancing conflicting demands from the political level, external interest groups, and the organization in order to serve a higher concept of the public good.

Proposition 8/Corollary 2: Collective Management Responsibilities²

ADMs' collective management responsibilities are fundamentally different from those of deputy ministers, as they do not possess multiple accountabilities to political and administrative authorities.

Proposition 9: Job Function Distinctions

Program managers, supporting staff managers, and managers of professional ADMs differ significantly in their performance of certain tasks, orientations to other system actors, and role conceptions.

Proposition 9/Corollary 1: Distinguishing Characteristics of Supporting Staff Managers

Supporting staff managers are distinguished by:

- (a) formal responsibilities for exercising control over other principal managerial cohorts using dictates and perspectives defined by central administrative authorities.
- (b) high frequency of contact with other principal managerial cohorts whose members seek advice on matters of central agency policies and preferences.
- (c) divided accountabilities to departmental hierarchy and peers, and to central agencies and the standards of their governmental profession.

Proposition 9/Corollary 2: Distinguishing Characteristics of Managers of Professionals

Managers of professionals are distinguished by:

- (a) a strong allegiance to their "first" or "principal" profession.
- (b) requirement to balance organizational and professional perspectives.
- (c) loose supervision from above.
- (d) collegial and largely informal relationships with subordinates.
- (e) strong substantive focus to interactions with subordinates.
- (f) requirements to convert technical information and ideas developed within the organization into understandable form so they can be communicated within the system to nonprofessionals.

² Deputy Ministerial Literature.

Proposition 9/Corollary 3: Distinguishing Characteristics of Program Managers
Program managers are distinguished by:

- (a) less active departmental peer consultation than supporting staff managers.
- (b) less active liaison with members of their first profession than managers of professionals and supporting staff managers who claim a governmental profession.
- (c) attention to managing constituent relationships.
- (d) requirements for managing extra-agency relationships using persuasion, negotiation, and representation.

Proposition 9/Corollary 4: Relating to External Constituents

Program managers and managers of professionals more readily communicate with extragovernmental actors than do supporting staff managers.

Proposition 9/Corollary 5: Relating to Central Agencies

Supporting staff managers more readily communicate with central agencies than do program managers and managers of professionals.

APPENDIX E

MEAN IMPORTANCE SCORES OF SECTION 3 TASKS DISPLAYED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF ADM AVERAGES

<i>Var.: Job Task</i>		<i>Average Importance Score</i>			ANOVA F-test
		DM	ADM	EXL3	
066	Develop strategies to implement departmental policies.	4.92	4.63	4.43	p = .0118
062	Prepare replies to questions/queries directed to the minister.	4.73	4.57	4.39	p = .2715
064	Prepare briefing notes for the minister.	4.65	4.52	4.49	p = .7719
092	Prepare and defend budgets.	4.62	4.50	4.12	p = .0109
063	Prepare replies to questions/queries directed to the deputy minister.	1.23	4.49	4.59	p = .0001
067	Assist subordinate managers in setting long-range plans, goals, and objectives.	4.42	4.45	4.49	p = .9103
065	Prepare briefing notes for the deputy minister.	.40	4.44	4.55	p = .0001
076	Develop insight into the views and direction of the minister.	4.15	4.44	3.81	p = .0068
085	Determine the organizational structure requirement to meet departmental goals and objectives.	4.85	4.44	4.00	p = .0007
093	Determine areas of budgets which should be reduced/cut.	4.65	4.43	4.14	p = .0269
068	Review or approve subordinates' operational goals and objectives.	4.31	4.41	4.40	p = .8560
070	Assess the long-range direction of government policy in my area of responsibility.	4.73	4.4	4.07	p = .0112
077	Develop insight into the views and direction of the deputy minister.	.20	4.38	4.25	p = .0001
086	Plan and implement organizational changes.	4.81	4.36	4.22	p = .0288
078	Summarize information for the minister.	4.08	4.33	4.25	p = .6003
079	Summarize information for the deputy minister.	.17	4.29	4.49	p = .0001

APPENDIX E—Continued

<i>Var.: Job Task</i>		<i>Average Importance Score</i>			ANOVA F-test
		DM	ADM	EXL3	
080	Review and edit replies to ministerial inquiries.	3.58	4.27	4.27	p = .0218
061	Prepare responses to questions and issues raised in the Legislature.	4.42	4.25	3.93	p = .1573
069	Review project/program progress reports.	4.12	4.17	4.30	p = .5439
098	Determine the need to change programs to meet client demands, resource constraints, new policies.	4.46	4.11	4.17	p = .4326
097	Prepare strategic plans or impact statements.	4.46	4.07	3.77	p = .0312
090	Investigate financial variances (in a managerial rather than an accounting and control sense).	3.73	4.03	3.90	p = .4499
096	Develop strategies for the introduction of programs/services or changes to them.	4.12	3.96	3.85	p = .6806
088	Allocate financial resources to project, capital expenditures.	4.50	3.89	3.92	p = .0731
099	Approve proposals for new, or changes to, program services.	4.12	3.89	3.76	p = .5097
081	Prepare reports or discussion papers on trends and issues.	3.73	3.85	3.83	p = .8912
083	Prepare inputs to draft legislation, major government statements, and cabinet documents.	4.50	3.75	3.07	p = .0001
071	Prepare information on the trends and issues which may lead to legislative questions.	4.00	3.64	3.33	p = .0348
089	Approve requests for management training and development.	3.58	3.58	3.88	p = .1532
073	Consult with or provide advice to other Government of Alberta agencies.	4.04	3.50	3.44	p = .0732
084	Prepare cabinet documents.	4.46	3.47	1.97	p = .0001
074	Consult with or provide advice to associations or interest groups.	3.96	3.33	3.30	p = .0890

APPENDIX E—Continued

<i>Var.: Job Task</i>	<i>Average Importance Score</i>			ANOVA F-test
	DM	ADM	EXL3	
087 Advise other departments on technical or operational matters in area of expertise.	3.81	3.30	3.48	p = .2229
095 Review or approve requests for feasibility studies.	3.35	3.30	3.20	p = .8518
082 Prepare proposals for draft legislation.	3.88	3.25	2.75	p = .0077
094 Identify requirements for capital budgets.	3.73	3.12	3.42	p = .1961
091 Authorize the transfer of funds to other units or agencies.	3.58	3.04	2.90	p = .2066
072 Consult with or provide advice to private industry.	3.35	2.94	2.75	p = .2676
075 Give advice or answer questions at cabinet, caucus, or legislative committees.	3.88	2.94	1.55	p = .0001

APPENDIX F

MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS (5-POINT SCALE) OF OTHER SYSTEM ACTORS COMPARED BY ALBERTA PUBLIC SERVICE EXECUTIVE LEVEL COHORT

Var. Other System Actor	APS Executive Cohort			Adj. R ²	F- test	p.
	ADMs	DMs	EXL3			
031 My deputy minister	4.04 (3)	4.19 (3)	4.14 (2)	-.008	.134	.8748
032 My assistant deputy minister(s)	3.09 (10)	3.35 (7)	3.00 (12)	-.007	.218	.8041
033 Treasury department officials	3.10 (9)	3.23 (8)	3.31 (7)	-.006	.376	.6871
034 PAO departmental officials	2.47 (16)	2.35 (14)	2.90 (13)	.014	2.833	.0818
035 Executive council officials	2.11 (19)	2.31 (15)	2.51 (17)	.001	1.020	.3625
036 FIGA officials	2.02 (21)	1.88 (23)	2.08 (21)	-.008	.155	.8568
037 Others at my rank in the department	3.93 (4)	3.77 (4)	3.95 (4)	-.008	.154	.8577
038 Peers in other departments	3.75 (5)	3.58 (5)	3.85 (5)	-.001	.870	.4205
039 The premier	1.47 (25)	0.77 (29)	1.48 (26)	.005	1.513	.2227
040 My minister	4.14 (2)	4.42 (1)	4.20 (1)	-.006	.404	.6680
041 My minister's office	4.30 (1)	4.38 (2)	4.12 (3)	-.002	.806	.4479
042 Other ministers	2.15 (18)	2.00 (21)	2.38 (19)	-.004	.588	.5564
043 Other ministers' offices	2.44 (17)	1.96 (22)	2.45 (18)	-.001	.996	.3710
044 Government backbenchers	1.98 (22)	2.04 (19)	1.82 (24)	-.007	.300	.7411
045 Opposition party MLAs	1.29 (28)	1.15 (25)	1.43 (27)	-.005	.479	.6200
046 Legislative Assembly committee	1.52 (24)	1.19 (24)	1.89 (23)	.007	1.780	.1711
047 Caucus committees	1.46 (26)	0.81 (28)	1.68 (25)	.012	2.335	.0992
048 Federal MPs and senators	0.97 (30)	1.12 (26)	1.08 (29)	-.007	.212	.8088
049 Local government politicians	1.94 (23)	2.12 (18)	2.06 (22)	-.008	.149	.8618

APPENDIX F—Continued

<i>Var. Other System Actor</i>	<i>APS Executive Cohort</i>			<i>Adj. R²</i>	<i>F- test</i>	<i>p.</i>
	<i>ADMs</i>	<i>DMs</i>	<i>EXL3</i>			
050 The ombudsman	2.06 (20)	2.23 (16)	2.26 (20)	-.006	.311	.7332
051 Members of the judiciary	1.38 (27)	0.69 (30)	1.08 (29)	.010	2.134	.1209
052 Officials of the federal government	3.09 (10)	3.00 (12)	3.06 (11)	-.009	.042	.9592
053 Officials of other provincial governments	3.27 (8)	3.12 (11)	3.15 (9)	-.007	.274	.7609
054 Local government officials	2.68 (13)	2.62 (13)	2.52 (16)	-.007	.206	.8143
055 Associations or interest groups	3.55 (6)	3.50 (6)	3.68 (6)	-.007	.235	.7906
3056 Members of my principal profession	2.91 (12)	3.19 (9)	3.15 (9)	-.003	.676	.5096
057 CEOs, private firms	2.66 (14)	2.23 (16)	2.84 (14)	.003	1.373	.2555
058 Managers, private firms	2.56 (15)	2.00 (20)	2.82 (15)	.015	2.671	.0715
059 Labour (extra-governmental)	1.09 (29)	1.00 (27)	1.19 (28)	-.007	.218	.8047
060 Private citizens	3.41 (7)	3.15 (10)	3.28 (8)	-.006	.365	.6944

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