

Vice-Chancellor's Introduction



For many people the year 2000 heralded the dawn of a new millennium, and a collective sense of hope and expectation. On a personal level, my appointment and arrival as Vice-Chancellor of Southern Cross University in 2000 also heralded hope, commitment and expectation.

Having had the opportunity as the incoming Vice-Chancellor to familiarise myself with this University in all its parts, I have been enormously impressed by the dedication of the staff, the University's outstanding achievements in teaching, research, and scholarship, and the vigour of the University's service to its professional and geographic communities in the region.

In 2000 the University consolidated its position as an institution dedicated to the highest levels of academic achievement in several niche areas. Through the activity of specialist centres, such as its Centre for Phytochemistry and the Centre for Plant Conservation Genetics, the University has shown itself to be at the forefront of developments in the rapidly growing biotechnology field.

Earlier in the year the University, together with the University of New England, acquired a prime ocean-front site close to our Coffs Harbour Campus that is intended to eventually become the home of this country's premier ocean and marine research facility, the National Marine Science Centre.

Work also commenced on a new campus located in Tweed Heads. This new campus has been designed to include the latest in educational delivery technology, including high-level internet connectivity, interactive videoconferencing and desktop video technology to link the new campus with other parts of Southern Cross and the universal community of scholars and learning around the world.

Together with the physical growth of the University there has been a steady growth in student numbers, both local and international. Indeed the growth in visiting international students has been explosive with visitors from around the globe eager to share in the academic and cultural offerings provided at Southern Cross and to enjoy the delights of the NSW North Coast region. Our offshore programs have also burgeoned; we now have many vibrant and productive international academic collaborations, and there are students studying in Southern Cross programs across the globe.

Towards the end of 2000 I commissioned a review of university organisational structures to examine where efficiencies and economies might be made. It is my firm belief that upon completion of this review and subsequent administrative enhancements that Southern Cross University will be optimally positioned to meet the challenges and accountabilities of an increasingly competitive higher education sector.



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