

COMPANY SECRETARY SURVEY 2004

Mahlab Recruitment, in conjunction with Chartered Secretaries Australia (CSA), recently released the results of market research indicating that the company secretarial profession continues to grow as an area of interest for people wanting to develop their career in a commercial environment. The survey focused on salaries and working practices and has provided the opportunity for individuals to benchmark themselves against their colleagues within the profession.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Information was collected via online questionnaires, completed by CSA members from around the country. The breakdown of responses by state is as follows:

State	% of respondents
NSW	37%
VIC	30%
QLD	19%
WA	10%
TAS	2%
SA	1%
ACT	1%

These participation figures are roughly in line with the percentage of members in those states, so the balance is as expected.

The survey respondents are all well qualified, with 42% holding one degree and 48% holding multiple qualifications. 22% of respondents are qualified lawyers. The most common **qualifications** were, in order:

- 1 B.Bus
- 2 Grad.Dip.Csp
- 3 LLB
- 4 B.Com
- 5 Other
- 6 B.Ec
- 7 BA
- 8 MBA

Other degrees included Bachelor of Science, Finance or Education.

Professional recognition also featured strongly with recipients listing the following as the top ten most common **professional designations**:

- 1 FCIS
- 2 ACIS
- 3 CPA
- 4 CSA Affiliate
- 5 ACA
- 6 FCPA
- 7 MAICD
- 8 FAICD
- 9 ASIA
- 10 SIA (Aff)

Mahlab Recruitment

Melbourne

Level 12
535 Bourke Street
MELBOURNE
VIC 3000 AUSTRALIA

P: 03 9629 2111
F: 03 9629 2155
E: melb@mahlab.com.au

Sydney

Level 6
20 Loftus Street
SYDNEY
NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA

P: 02 9241 1199
F: 02 9241 1189
E: syd@mahlab.com.au

Website

www.mahlab.com.au

The Mahlab logo consists of the word "Mahlab" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, oriented vertically on a dark blue rectangular background.

Respondents were asked to provide their job title, and the results showed that in addition to sole focus on company secretarial duties, most CSA members undertake roles that encompass a range of responsibilities. The top ten most common **job titles** were:

- 1 Company/ Corporate Secretary
- 2 Company Secretary/Chief Financial Officer
- 3 Other
- 4 Financial Controller
- 5 Company Secretary/ General Counsel
- 6 Chief Financial Officer
- 7 Assistant Company Secretary
- 8 Director
- 9 Compliance Officer
- 10 Board and Secretarial Officer

COMPANY DETAILS

A broad range of industries were represented, with the breakdown of respondents working in the following sectors:

Industry	% of respondents
Manufacturing	17%
Financial Services	13%
Resources	7%
Property/Construction	7%
Multiple	7%
Utilities	5%
Insurance	4%
Government	3%
Education	1%
Other	36%

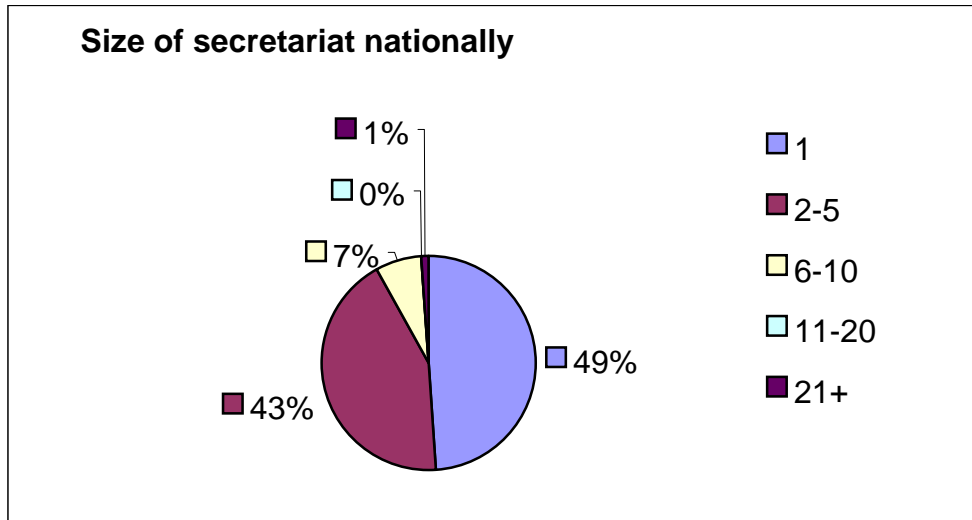
The **scope of business operations** was fairly evenly balanced, with 27% operating at a state level, 39% at a national level and 34% internationally.

Of those surveyed, the highest proportion worked for a publicly listed company, the complete breakdown is as follows:

Company	% of respondents
Privately owned	28%
Publicly listed with market capitalisation of less than Aus\$ 1 billion	25%
Publicly listed with market capitalisation of between Aus\$ 1-4 billion	7%
Publicly listed with market capitalisation of between Aus\$ 4-10 billion	5%
Publicly listed with market capitalisation of over Aus\$ 10 billion	5%
Public unlisted	15%
Government Body	5%
Association	1%
Other	9%

COMPANY SECRETARY FUNCTION

There continues to be a growth in the number of individuals working within company secretariats. The traditional model with one person responsible for all company secretarial functions is still the majority, with a significant 49% of respondents performing company secretarial duties on their own.



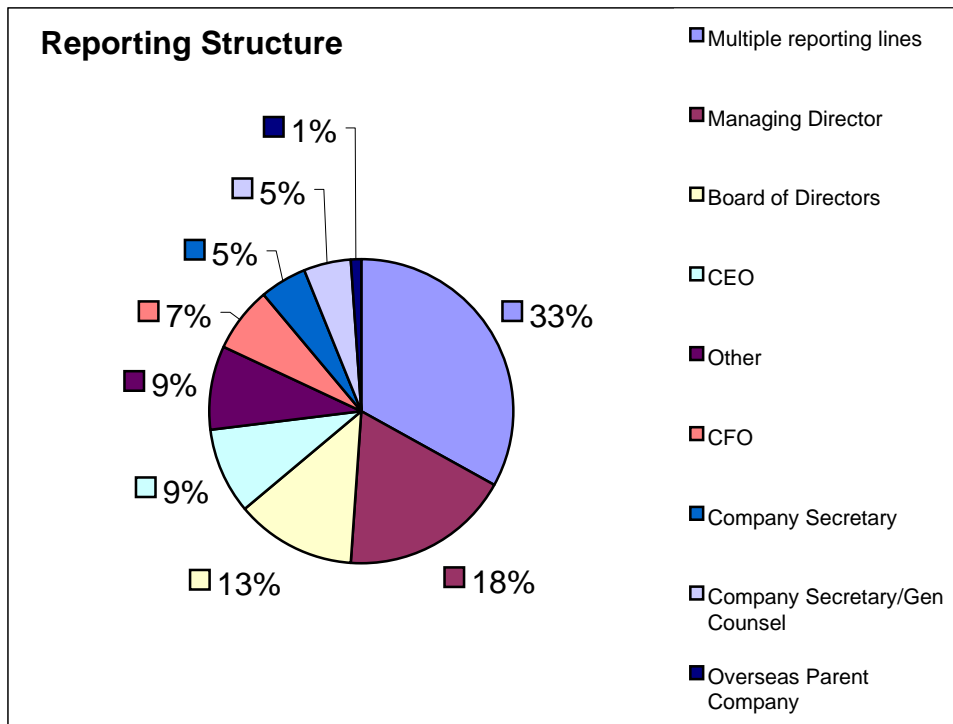
Company secretaries assume responsibilities across a range of areas, and in some cases, a range of companies.

Whilst 18% of respondents were responsible for company secretarial activities for a single company, 16% were responsible for more than one company, 19% for domestic subsidiary companies, and a substantial 47% for multiple companies.

Key responsibilities, in order of the most commonly cited by survey respondents, are as follows:

- Compliance with Corporations Act
- Attending Board Committee Meetings as Secretary
- ASIC lodgements
- All Company Secretariat operations
- Preparation of Board papers
- Responsible for planning and convening shareholder meetings
- Attending Main Board Meetings as Secretary
- Preparation of annual report
- Attending subsidiary meetings as Secretary
- Management of share registry (either internally or externally sourced)
- Compliance with ASX listing rules
- Management of Share Plans

Reporting lines also varied greatly, with multiple reporting lines the most common structure for company secretaries.



The 33% of **multiple reporting lines** is broken down as follows:

Reporting structure	% of respondents
Board of Directors + CEO	26%
Board of Directors + CEO + Overseas Parent Company	2%
Board of Directors + CFO	2%
Board of Directors + Company Secretary	2%
Board of Directors + Managing Director	34%
Board of Directors + Managing Director + CEO	8%
Board of Directors + Managing Director + CFO	3%
Board of Directors + Managing Director + Overseas Parent Company	5%
Board of Directors + Overseas Parent Company	2%
CFO + CoSec	3%
CFO + CoSec + Overseas Parent Company	2%
CFO + Overseas Parent Company	2%
CoSec/GC + Overseas Parent Company	2%
Managing Director + CFO	5%
Managing Director + Overseas Parent Company	2%

SALARIES

The survey showed that in general there has been a steady increase in salaries across the nation, with an average increase in salary packages (comprising base salary and compulsory superannuation) of 5.34%. There is still a wide range of salaries within the company secretarial field, reflecting the disparity of responsibilities undertaken by those working in this area. An individual's positioning within a range depends on a number of factors including background and experience, size of the organisation and its company secretariat, industry sector and the level of management responsibility within the role.

The following table shows the range of salary packages (comprising base salary and compulsory superannuation) earned by those working in both publicly listed and non-publicly listed companies.

State	Publicly listed range	Average	Other range	Average
NSW	\$86,000 - \$400,000	\$206,357	\$80,000 - \$390,000	\$168,894
VIC	\$100,000- \$400,000	\$203,771	\$68,000 - \$250,000	\$123,797
QLD	\$76,500 - \$230,000	\$137,140	\$70,000 - \$180,000	\$112,547
WA	\$68,500 - \$246,000	\$157,401	\$75,000 - \$187,000	\$126,667

The ranges for those working in publicly listed companies in Queensland and Western Australia were on a par with their counterparts in the south-eastern states. This is a trend that does not naturally follow their contemporaries in other professions, including the legal arena.

We are aware that there maybe some individuals in major companies who are on salaries in excess of the bands revealed by the survey, however they would be the exception.

BONUSES

The survey found that 65% of respondents worked for companies that also offered performance based bonuses.

Those who responded 'Yes' advised the **bonus was based on:**

- Individual performance 14%
- Department performance 2%
- Company performance 25%
- All of the above 59%

BENEFITS

Share plans/options	36%
Discretionary bonus	23%
Additional leave without pay	8%
Additional superannuation	16%
Mobile phone	67%
Home telephone	17%
Vehicle	38%
Private health insurance	5%
Secondments – Local	1%
Secondments – International	1%
Management training	29%
Flexible work arrangements	27%
Gym memberships	6%
Interstate Travel	20%
International Travel	1%
After hours travel allowance	4%
Subsidised meals	6%
Stress Management (yoga, massage, chiropractic)	5%
Income protection insurance	22%
Professional Memberships	74%
Further study - full fees	25%
Further study - part fees	9%
Paid study leave	10%
Unpaid study leave	2%
Laptop	34%
Home computer connection	20%
Paid maternity/paternity leave	9%

WORKING PRACTICES

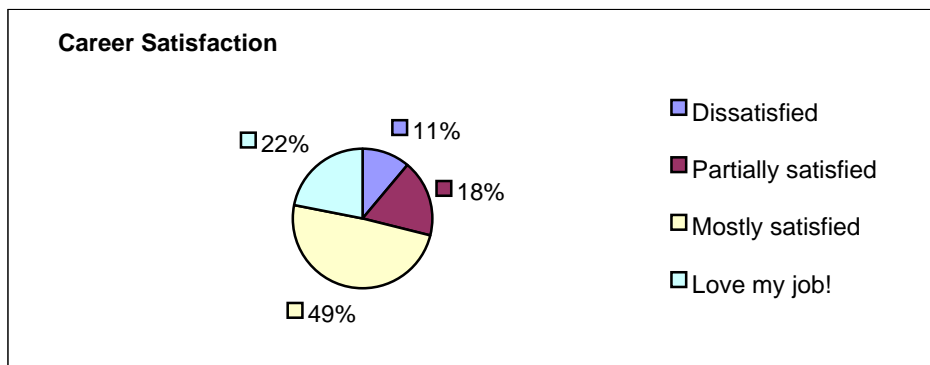
The **average working week** for those in the company secretary area is approximately 51 hours. Whether the company secretariat consists of one person or 10, the average hours worked per person is remarkably similar.

Size of company secretariat	Average hours per week
1	52.7
2-5	51.3
6-10	50.1

This suggests an increasing division of responsibilities and specialisation within the broader company secretarial function. An example is the separation of responsibilities for the parent company and its subsidiaries. In the past, a sole company secretary would have been responsible for all associated businesses. Now, subsidiary responsibilities may be assumed by an assistant company secretary, creating a more streamlined function.

What is also evident from the survey is that, like other professions, there is a **continued focus on flexible working arrangements**. 51% of those surveyed advised that they contributed 10-20% of the time spent on company secretarial responsibilities through working from home. 7% of respondents work part-time.

CAREER SATISFACTION AND DEVELOPMENT



Whilst 62% of those surveyed advised they were not looking to leave their current role, respondents ranked the following in order as **reasons that could influence a decision to leave**:

- 1 Work/life balance
- 2 Career development
- 3 Salary
- 4 Quality of work
- 5 Other: Challenge, Location, Leadership, conflict with management

Finally, CSA members were asked about their interest in **general management**. 69% advised they were interested in pursuing a career in general management, however 58% did not believe their company would provide the opportunity to develop their career in this direction.