



CEO comment



Secure, reliable and accessible water supplies are essential across the whole of Australia. Water security in the extensive arid parts of the country is reliant upon groundwater to meet the often competing requirements of remote towns, isolated Aboriginal communities, the pastoral and mining industries and the environment. Greater understanding and predictability of groundwater resources in these regions is imperative for current and sustainable future water supplies.

This issue of AusGeo News includes details of a regional-scale project completed by Geoscience Australia on ‘Water for Australia’s arid zone—Identifying and assessing Australia’s palaeovalley groundwater resources’. The work was funded by the National Water Commission and supported by Western Australia (WA), South Australia (SA) and the Northern Territory (NT) government agencies to better understand the characteristics and behaviour of groundwater resources in Australia’s arid areas.

The study achieved both a broad scale perspective and new insight in regions where little to no previous hydrogeological work had been conducted and found ways to disclose ‘hidden’ networks of aquifers and water resources in regions covered by desert dunefields. Geoscience Australia scientists were able to date the groundwaters and reveal the widespread presence of palaeowaters in these aquifers which has some implications for managing this legacy of past climates in Australia’s arid and semi-arid zones into the future.

The project has delivered a map of palaeovalleys across the arid and semi-arid zones of WA, SA and the NT.

An article on High Performance Computing (HPC) showcases many of the aspects of where our organisation is heading. The need to be at the cutting edge of national scale geoscientific data analysis in a world of exponentially increasing data volumes has required the adaption and adoption of the latest tools and technologies to enable Geoscience Australia to provide new and improved products and services in a timely way to our stakeholders. There is a need for our organisation to invest in such technology given that Geoscience Australia is extremely data rich and will increasingly be challenged by the demands of data storage, access, utilisation, modelling and scenario building. Geoscience Australia commenced this work in partnership with the CSIRO Minerals Down Under Flagship and the National Computational Infrastructure facility at the Australian National University.

Geoscience Australia is commemorating Canberra’s Centenary by hosting a display of maps, satellite images and aerial photography illustrating how the nation’s capital has taken shape over the past 100 years. The display highlights the role Geoscience Australia and its predecessors played in establishing the Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Drew Clarke has recently been appointed as Secretary to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Drew for his great support for Geoscience Australia during his time as Secretary to the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET), and wish him well in his new role. Mr Blair Comley, PSM, has been appointed the new RET Secretary.



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