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CEO comment

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This issue of *AusGeo News* reports on Geoscience Australia's programs to provide pre-competitive information to support industry's search for new offshore and onshore energy resources as well as contribute to the mitigation of the effects of natural hazards.

There is an article on the highly encouraging results from initial analysis of potential petroleum source rocks from geological sampling in the Bight Basin, an offshore frontier exploration area. Some samples have high organic carbon content and the potential to generate liquid petroleum, and represent the best source rock results reported from the Bight Basin.

Explorers interested in the 2007 Release of offshore petroleum exploration areas will also be assisted by Geoscience Australia's Acreage Release Data Room. The Data Room was opened by the Hon. Ian Macfarlane MP, Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources on 17 July.

Borrowings of pre-competitive data from Geoscience Australia for the first half of this year are more than double that for the whole of calendar year 2006. There is a report on the completion of the Remastering Project which copied more than half a million older seismic survey and well data tapes held by Geoscience Australia onto modern high density media. This was done as part of the Australian Government's New Petroleum Program (Big New Oil initiative) between 2004 and 2007.

There is also an update on the Onshore Energy Security Program. I am happy to report that the gravity survey of parts of the Cooper Basin and the acquisition of aeromagnetic data covering parts of the Canning Basin have been completed, and the processing of deep seismic data from the Mt Isa region of Queensland is progressing. A major deep crustal seismic transect from Cloncurry to Georgetown to Charters Towers – conducted in partnership with the Geological Survey of Queensland – will be completed in early September. The Australia-wide airborne geophysical tie-line survey (AWAGS 2) is more than 50 per cent complete and is scheduled to be completed by December.

This issue also includes an article outlining the planned activities and outputs of Geoscience Australia's Geothermal Project, a new project under the Energy Security Program. The project will acquire new heat flow and thermal conductivity data and integrate this with other datasets to map the continent's heat flow and define the geothermal potential in key regions across Australia.

There is also a report on Geoscience Australia's contribution to the emergency response following the severe flooding in Gippsland, Victoria in June this year. Geoscience Australia assisted by providing information on the extent of flooding derived from satellite imagery.

New products to assist mineral explorers include: a map that documents the nineteen major Proterozoic magmatic events and associated mineral deposits in the Northern Territory and South Australia, and geophysical datasets covering areas in Queensland (Mt Isa), Western Australia (Murchison) and Tasmania (Flinders Island). Scientists, natural resource managers, and the community now have access to the largest central source of coastal information and data in Australia through the OzEstuaries website.

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