

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.30 A.M. 20 JUNE 1995

ACTUAL AND EXPECTED PRIVATE MINERAL EXPLORATION, AUSTRALIA MARCH QUARTER 1995

Mineral exploration (other than for petroleum)

Exploration expenditure for the March quarter 1995 totalled \$190.3 million, an increase of 8.4 per cent compared to the March quarter 1994, but a decrease of 18.1 per cent compared to the December quarter 1994.

Exploration for gold decreased by 20.4 per cent since December quarter, to \$114.2 million (\$5.4 million more than in the March quarter 1994). Exploration for base metals fell 6.2 per cent in the quarter, while coal exploration was down 30.2 per cent.

Expenditure on production leases for the March quarter 1995 fell by 12.3 per cent from the previous quarter, but was 15.5 per cent higher than the March quarter 1994. Expenditure on all other areas decreased by 19.7 per cent from the December quarter 1994, but was 6.4 per cent higher than in the March quarter 1994.

There was negligible change in total metres drilled during March quarter 1995 compared with March

quarter 1994, but compared with December quarter 1994, there was 26.6 per cent less drilling.

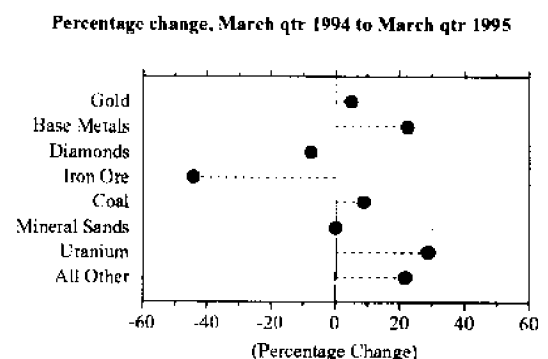
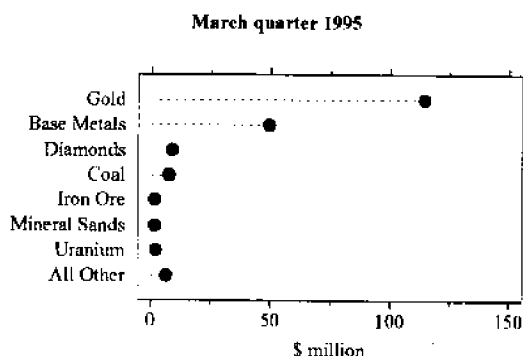
Petroleum exploration

Total expenditure on petroleum exploration in the March quarter 1995 was \$128.2 million, a decrease of 30.6 per cent compared to the December quarter 1994, but 13.8 per cent more than in the March quarter 1994.

Expenditure on production leases increased by 37.3 per cent compared to the March quarter 1994. Expenditure on all other areas increased by 10.1 per cent over the same period.

Total onshore exploration decreased by 33.6 per cent compared to the December quarter 1994. Total offshore exploration fell by 29.7 per cent this quarter, but was 24.7 per cent higher than in the March quarter 1994.

MINERAL EXPLORATION EXPENDITURE BY TYPE OF MINERAL SOUGHT



INQUIRIES

- for further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Nicole Pikos on Darwin (089) 432 171 or any ABS Office.
- for any information about other ABS statistics and services please contact Information Services on (06) 252 6007 or any other ABS State Office.

TABLE 1. PRIVATE EXPLORATION : ACTUAL AND EXPECTED EXPENDITURE

Period	Mineral (other than petroleum)			Petroleum onshore			Petroleum offshore		
	Expenditure		Actual as a percentage of expected	Expenditure		Actual as a percentage of expected	Expenditure		Actual as a percentage of expected
	Actual	Expected(a)		Actual	Expected(a)		Actual	Expected(a)	
	\$m	\$m	per cent	\$m	\$m	per cent	\$m	\$m	per cent
1988-89	697.6	578.8	120.5	233.6	301.1	77.6	405.7	404.9	100.2
1989-90(b)	607.5	539.1	112.7	143.2	216.1	66.3	439.4	413.8	106.2
1990-91	601.7	452.6	132.9	217.1	165.8	130.9	365.4	326.8	111.8
1991-92	604.0	466.5	129.5	135.3	191.3	70.7	338.8	344.0	98.5
1992-93	631.8	532.8	118.6	115.2	131.1	87.9	496.7	438.5	113.3
1993-94	792.6	553.0	143.3	144.5	100.1	144.4	362.1	459.2	78.9
<i>Six months ended</i>									
December 1993	396.4	233.6	169.3	66.1	59.9	110.3	203.6	224.1	90.9
June 1994	396.2	319.4	124.1	78.4	41.3	189.8	158.5	235.1	67.4
December 1994	458.4	349.2	131.3	84.0	58.8	142.9	281.1	336.3	83.6
June 1995	n.y.a.	347.0	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	61.5	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	255.8	n.y.a.

(a) As reported in a previous census. See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 9. (b) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 4.

TABLE 2. MINERAL EXPLORATION (OTHER THAN PETROLEUM) EXPENDITURE AND METRES DRILLED

Period	Expenditure (\$ million)			Metres drilled ('000 metres)		
	On production leases	On all other areas	Total	On production leases	On all other areas	Total
	1988-89	111.9	585.7	697.6	1,812	4,765
1989-90(a)	90.3	517.3	607.5	1,598	4,735	6,332
1990-91	115.4	486.3	601.7	1,760	4,452	6,212
1991-92	130.9	473.1	604.0	1,626	4,253	5,877
1992-93	148.4	483.4	631.8	1,944	5,049	6,993
1993-94	184.4	608.1	792.6	2,770	6,810	9,580
<i>1993-94</i>						
September quarter	43.6	143.8	187.5	617	1,892	2,509
December quarter	41.1	167.5	208.9	714	1,829	2,544
March quarter	38.8	136.8	175.6	596	1,446	2,042
June quarter	60.0	160.0	220.6	842	1,643	2,485
<i>1994-95</i>						
September quarter	51.0	175.0	226.1	833	1,918	2,751
December quarter	51.1	181.2	232.3	938	1,847	2,784
March quarter	44.8	145.5	190.3	726	1,319	2,044

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 4.

TABLE 3. MINERAL EXPLORATION (OTHER THAN FOR PETROLEUM) : EXPENDITURE BY STATE

Period	(\$ million)							
	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	Australia
1988-89	50.6	21.7	139.8	16.6	387.2	13.1	68.6	697.6
1989-90(a)	55.1	21.0	128.4	13.2	315.4	11.8	62.6	607.5
1990-91	60.6	12.7	124.1	15.5	324.8	9.9	53.9	601.7
1991-92	63.3	12.6	109.9	19.7	332.8	7.9	57.8	604.0
1992-93	60.9	12.2	117.9	21.3	348.1	7.8	63.5	631.8
1993-94	73.6	20.7	139.9	24.7	453.7	10.2	69.8	792.6
<i>1993-94</i>								
September quarter	14.4	3.5	33.1	5.6	110.4	1.7	18.9	187.5
December quarter	18.4	4.6	39.6	6.4	119.0	2.0	18.9	208.9
March quarter	15.8	6.3	30.2	6.9	100.9	3.4	12.1	175.6
June quarter	25.0	6.3	37.0	5.8	123.4	3.1	19.9	220.6
<i>1994-95</i>								
September quarter	18.4	6.7	45.0	4.6	127.5	2.8	21.1	226.1
December quarter	18.3	6.5	53.7	5.1	126.4	2.9	19.3	232.3
March quarter	19.8	9.3	32.4	4.6	106.3	4.0	14.1	190.3

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 4.

TABLE 4. MINERAL EXPLORATION (OTHER THAN FOR PETROLEUM)
EXPENDITURE BY TYPE OF MINERAL SOUGHT BY STATE, MARCH QUARTER 1995
(\$ million)

Period	Copper, lead zinc, silver nickel and cobalt	Gold	Iron ore	Mineral sands	Tin, tungsten, scheelite, wolfram	Uranium	Coal	Con- struction materials	Diamonds	Other	Total
Victoria	0.5	6.5	—	n.p.	—	—	n.p.	—	n.p.	2.1	9.3
Queensland	15.8	9.6	—	n.p.	0.2	n.p.	5.4	—	n.p.	0.7	32.4
South Australia	2.7	0.9	—	—	—	n.p.	n.p.	—	0.4	0.5	4.6
Western Australia	17.2	79.5	1.3	1.1	—	0.8	0.2	n.p.	5.1	0.8	106.3
Tasmania	3.1	0.3	—	—	—	—	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	4.0
Northern Territory	3.8	7.0	—	n.p.	—	0.5	—	—	2.3	0.4	14.1
Australia	49.2	114.2	1.4	1.5	0.2	1.8	7.4	0.2	8.6	5.8	190.3

TABLE 5. MINERAL EXPLORATION (OTHER THAN FOR PETROLEUM)
EXPENDITURE BY TYPE OF MINERAL SOUGHT, AUSTRALIA
(\$ million)

Period	Copper, lead zinc, silver nickel and cobalt	Gold	Iron ore	Mineral sands	Tin, tungsten, scheelite, wolfram	Uranium	Coal	Con- struction materials	Diamonds	Other	Total
1989-90 (a)	118.0	341.3	11.3	19.3	2.8	18.8	33.4	2.8	37.2	22.8	607.5
1990-91	171.8	300.8	11.2	19.2	2.4	12.8	23.1	2.7	39.0	18.5	601.7
1991-92	144.9	304.7	36.9	13.9	1.7	12.8	27.5	1.6	35.7	24.3	604.0
1992-93	183.4	320.1	24.0	9.8	0.5	8.8	24.2	1.1	38.1	21.9	631.8
1993-94	191.6	453.7	18.8	8.5	1.1	7.6	27.7	1.3	58.7	23.5	792.6
<i>1993-94</i>											
September quarter	48.0	100.1	6.1	2.4	0.1	2.6	6.4	0.3	15.8	5.7	187.5
December quarter	52.7	111.6	9.0	2.4	0.1	2.2	7.0	0.2	16.7	7.0	208.9
March quarter	40.2	108.8	2.5	1.5	0.7	1.4	6.8	0.3	9.3	4.1	175.6
June quarter	50.6	133.4	1.2	2.2	0.2	1.4	7.4	0.4	16.9	6.8	220.6
<i>1994-95</i>											
September quarter	47.8	138.2	2.9	1.9	0.1	2.1	10.7	0.1	17.0	5.2	226.1
December quarter	52.5	143.5	2.5	1.8	0.4	1.7	10.6	0.2	12.5	6.5	232.3
March quarter	49.2	114.2	1.4	1.5	0.2	1.8	7.4	0.2	8.6	5.8	190.3

(a) See Explanatory Note, paragraph 4.

TABLE 6. PETROLEUM EXPLORATION EXPENDITURE
(\$ million)

Period	Onshore			Offshore			Total expenditure		Total
	Drilling	Other	Total	Drilling	Other	Total	On	On	
							production leases	all other areas	
1988-89	136.1	97.5	233.6	299.4	106.2	405.7	130.1	509.2	639.3
1989-90	73.8	69.5	143.2	349.8	89.6	439.4	65.5	517.2	582.6
1990-91	128.8	88.3	217.1	257.1	108.4	365.4	131.2	451.4	582.6
1991-92	60.5	75.0	135.3	142.2	196.4	338.8	70.4	403.6	473.9
1992-93	62.8	52.4	115.2	283.7	213.1	496.7	69.1	542.9	611.9
1993-94	84.4	60.0	144.5	208.0	154.2	362.2	70.1	436.5	506.7
<i>1993-94</i>									
September quarter	23.5	11.2	34.8	68.3	35.5	103.7	15.7	122.8	138.5
December quarter	17.1	14.2	31.3	58.5	41.4	99.9	19.3	111.9	131.2
March quarter	14.5	17.9	32.4	40.0	40.4	80.3	15.0	97.7	112.7
June quarter	29.3	16.7	46.0	41.2	37.0	78.2	20.2	104.1	124.2
<i>1994-95</i>									
September quarter	26.0	15.8	41.7	108.5	30.2	138.7	28.9	151.5	180.5
December quarter	17.2	25.1	42.3	106.7	35.7	142.4	25.9	158.7	184.7
March quarter	11.9	16.2	28.1	73.6	26.5	100.1	20.6	107.6	128.2

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains annual and quarterly statistics of private sector exploration for minerals (other than oil shale) in Australia.

Source

2. Data are collected and compiled from the exploration censuses conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Scope and coverage

3. All exploration activity is included, regardless of the main activity of the explorer. Details of exploration are collected from all private enterprises known to be engaged in exploration.

4. From September quarter 1989, details of mineral explorers reporting less than \$5,000 per quarter have been excluded from the Tables, resulting in a small break in the series from 1989-90. Data linking the two collection methodologies for Tables 2, 3 and 5 are contained in the September quarter 1990 issue.

Classification

5. The following categories are used :

(a) *Production lease/Other*, where a production lease is an area on which production or development is actually taking place.

(b) *Onshore/Offshore*, where offshore includes all operations in a marine area under the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1967* or under any Acts administered by State governments.

(c) *Drilling/Other*, where *drilling expenditure* includes cost of access (roads, vessel hire, etc.) to the drilling site and site preparation etc., and *other expenditure* includes costs of surveys, report writing, map preparation and all other activities attributable to exploration.

Definitions

6. *Minerals*. In the broad sense these comprise metallic minerals, construction materials, gemstones, other non-metallic minerals and petroleum (oil or gas).

7. *Exploration*. This includes the search for new ore occurrences or undiscovered oil or gas, and/or appraisal intended to delineate or greatly extend the limits of known deposits of minerals or oil or gas reservoirs by geological, geophysical, geochemical, drilling or other methods. This includes construction of shafts and adits primarily for exploration purposes but excludes activity of a developmental or production nature. Exploration for water is excluded.

8. *Exploration expenditure*. This covers all expenditure on exploration activity in Australia. It includes expenditure on aerial surveys (including landsat photographs), general surveys, report writing, map

preparation and other activities indirectly attributable to exploration. Cash bids for offshore petroleum exploration permits are also included.

9. *Expected expenditure*. This refers to expected expenditure on exploration as reported by private enterprise explorers who were included in the previous census. Events such as new discoveries, unexpected weather conditions, government policy changes and unforeseen changes in economic conditions may cause actual expenditures to differ from those previously expected. The differences between actual and expected expenditure can be seen in Table 1.

Related Information

10. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the Catalogue of Publications and Products Australia (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a Publications Advice (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

11. Publications showing the details of wells and metres drilled in petroleum exploration are available from the Petroleum Resource Assessment Branch of the Bureau of Resource Sciences (formerly the BMR).

Symbols and other usages

n.y.a. not yet available
n.p. not available for separate publication but included in totals
n.a. not available
nil or rounded to zero
r figures revised since previous issue

12. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of the component items and their totals.

13. Percentage changes shown in this publication have been calculated on actual figures as reported by explorers.

Electronic services

Electronic Data Services

A large range of ABS data is available via on-line services, diskette, magnetic tape, tape cartridge, and CD-ROM. For more details on Electronic Data Services contact Information Services in any of the ABS Offices.

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

