

CATALOGUE NO. 8412.0

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.30 A.M. 6 APRIL 1994

ACTUAL AND EXPECTED PRIVATE MINERAL EXPLORATION, AUSTRALIA DECEMBER QUARTER 1993

MAIN FEATURES

Mineral exploration (other than for petroleum)

Total exploration expenditure for the December quarter 1993 increased by 11.9 per cent from the September quarter 1993. Expenditure on production leases dropped by 5.0 per cent to \$41.4 million, and for all other areas it showed an increase of 17.1 per cent to \$167.5 million.

All states had increased exploration expenditure, with increases ranging from 8.6 per cent in Western Australia to 31.4 per cent in Victoria.

Expenditure on exploration for most minerals increased. Iron ore experienced the largest increase of 69.8 per cent, while in absolute terms gold continued to dominate as the principal mineral sought with expenditure increasing by \$11.5 million to \$111.6 million during December quarter 1993. Uranium decreased by 15.4 per cent.

Total metres drilled increased in the December quarter 1993 by 1.4 per cent. There was an increase of 15.7 per cent to 714,000 metres on production

leases, but drilling on all other areas decreased by 3.3 per cent to 1.8 million metres.

Petroleum Exploration

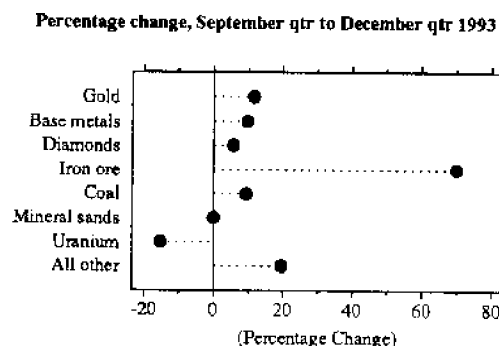
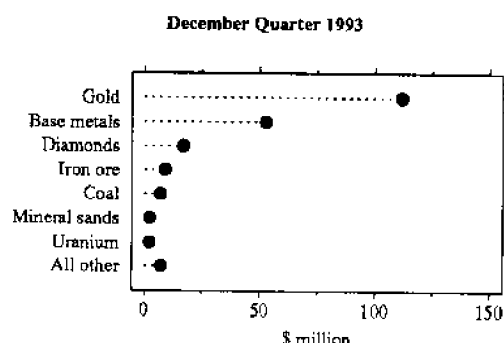
Expenditure on petroleum exploration decreased by 5.3 per cent from the revised September quarter 1993 figure of \$138.5 million to \$131.2 million.

Onshore expenditure decreased by 10.1 per cent from the revised September quarter figure of \$34.8 million to \$31.3 million.

Offshore expenditure decreased by 3.7 per cent to \$99.9 million.

Expenditure on production leases for the December quarter was \$19.3 million, an increase of 22.9 per cent from the September quarter 1993, while expenditure on all other areas decreased from the revised September quarter figure of \$122.8 to \$111.9, a decrease of 8.9 per cent.

MINERAL EXPLORATION EXPENDITURE BY MINERALS



INQUIRIES

- for further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Nicole Pikos on Darwin (089) 43 2171 or any ABS office.
- for information about other ABS statistics and services please contact Information Services on Canberra (06) 252 6007 or any 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
1987-88	802.2	607.5	132.0	271.9	304.9	89.2	223.2	181.2	123.2
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
<i>Six months ended</i>									
December 1992	335.5	257.0	130.5	68.6	70.3	97.6	258.2	231.8	111.4
June 1993	296.3	275.8	107.4	46.6	60.8	76.6	238.5	206.6	115.4
December 1993	395.6	233.6	169.3	66.1	59.9	110.3	203.6	224.1	90.9
June 1994	n.y.a.	319.4	..	n.y.a.	41.3	..	n.y.a.	235.1	..

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

TABLE 2. MINERAL EXPLORATION (OTHER THAN FOR 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
1987-88	151.9	650.3	802.2	1,839	6,519	8,358
1988-89	111.9	585.7	697.6	1,812	4,765	6,577
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
<i>1992-93 —</i>						
September quarter	37.6	123.3	160.9	494	1,144	1,638
December quarter	36.8	137.8	174.6	524	1,477	2,001
March quarter	38.5	84.5	123.0	446	822	1,268
June quarter	35.5	137.8	173.3	480	1,606	2,086
<i>1993-94 —</i>						
September quarter	43.6	143.0	186.7	617	1,892	2,509
December quarter	41.4	167.5	208.9	714	1,829	2,544

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 4.

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

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	Australia
1987-88	64.5	33.9	159.3	18.9	466.3	10.4	48.9	802.2
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
<i>1992-93 —</i>								
September quarter	15.4	3.0	33.0	5.5	86.5	1.1	16.4	160.9
December quarter	20.3	3.4	34.5	5.9	91.6	1.7	17.2	174.6
March quarter	9.1	2.8	20.2	3.8	74.2	2.2	10.6	123.0
June quarter	16.1	3.0	30.2	6.1	95.8	2.8	19.3	173.3
<i>1993-94 —</i>								
September quarter	14.4	3.5	33.1	5.6	109.6	1.7	18.9	186.7
December quarter	18.4	4.6	39.6	6.4	119.0	2.0	18.9	208.9

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 4.

TABLE 4. MINERAL EXPLORATION (OTHER THAN FOR PETROLEUM)
EXPENDITURE BY TYPE OF MINERAL SOUGHT BY STATE, DECEMBER QUARTER 1993
(\$ million)

	Copper, lead, zinc, silver, nickel and cobalt	Gold	Iron ore	Mineral sands	Tin, tungsten, scheelite, wolfram	Uranium	Coal	Con- struction materials	Diamonds	Other	Total
New South Wales	5.9	6.5	n.p.	0.3	n.p.	-	2.3	n.p.	0.2	3.0	18.4
Victoria	0.7	3.7	-	n.p.	-	-	-	-	n.p.	0.2	4.6
Queensland	19.8	13.1	n.p.	0.4	-	0.9	4.4	n.p.	n.p.	0.8	39.6
South Australia	3.8	1.8	-	-	n.p.	0.2	n.p.	-	0.3	0.3	6.4
Western Australia	17.4	73.5	8.9	1.6	-	0.4	0.3	n.p.	14.6	2.3	119.0
Tasmania	1.4	0.4	n.p.	-	n.p.	-	n.p.	n.p.	-	0.1	2.0
Northern Territory	3.7	12.5	-	n.p.	n.p.	0.7	-	n.p.	1.7	0.2	18.9
Australia	52.7	111.6	9.0	2.4	0.1	2.2	7.0	0.2	16.7	7.0	208.9

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
1987-88	83.9	581.0	11.8	12.5	2.8	23.2	27.5	0.9	24.3	34.1	802.2
1988-89	100.4	448.5	7.0	16.5	1.4	28.3	29.0	1.1	32.6	32.7	697.6
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
1992-93 —											
September quarter	45.6	75.5	9.5	1.9	0.3	3.1	7.1	0.4	11.0	6.5	160.9
December quarter	55.9	83.8	7.2	2.6	0.1	2.5	7.1	0.3	9.6	5.5	174.6
March quarter	32.5	69.7	2.8	2.7	—	1.3	3.8	0.3	5.8	4.2	123.0
June quarter	49.4	91.1	4.5	2.6	0.1	1.9	6.2	0.1	11.7	5.7	173.3
1993-94 —											
September quarter	48.0	100.1	5.3	2.4	0.1	2.6	6.4	0.3	15.8	5.7	186.7
December quarter	52.7	111.6	9.0	2.4	0.1	2.2	7.0	0.2	16.7	7.0	208.9

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 4.

TABLE 6. PETROLEUM EXPLORATION EXPENDITURE
(\$ million)

Period	Onshore			Offshore			Total expenditure		
	Drilling	Other	Total	Drilling	Other	Total	On production leases	On all other areas	Total
1987-88	154.8	117.1	271.9	137.7	85.5	223.2	122.8	372.3	495.1
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
1992-93 —									
September quarter	18.1	16.4	34.6	56.7	49.0	105.6	21.6	118.6	140.2
December quarter	19.0	15.1	34.0	77.4	75.2	152.6	21.3	165.4	186.6
March quarter	11.7	8.2	19.9	58.6	52.0	110.6	13.0	117.4	130.4
June quarter	14.0	12.7	26.7	91.0	36.9	127.9	13.2	141.5	154.7
1993-94 —									
September quarter	23.5	111.2	134.8	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

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, oil shale 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 publications

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 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
"	not applicable
—	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.

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