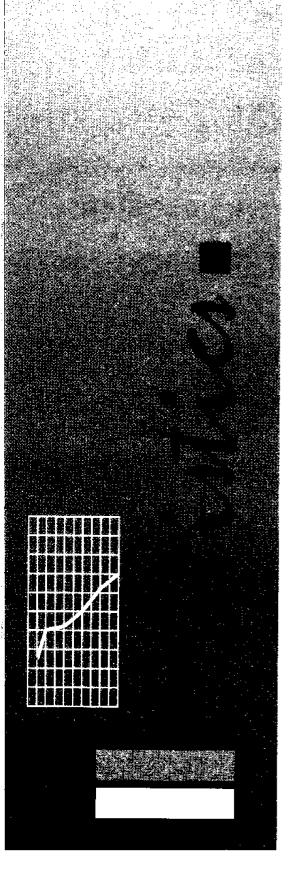


June Quarter 1997

EMBARGO: 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUES 30 SEPT 1997



Actual and Expected Private Mineral Exploration

Australia

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE

RELEASE DATE

September quarter 1997

22 December 1997

December quarter 1997

20 March 1998

CHANGES IN THIS
PUBLICATION

This issue contains revised seasonally adjusted and trend estimates following the annual review of seasonal factors. See paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes for more detail.

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

n.a. not available

n.p. not available for publication but included in totals where applicable

n.y.a. not yet available

figure or series revised since previous issue

., not applicable

— nil or rounded to zero

INQUIRIES

For information about other ABS statistics and services inlease refer to the back of this publication.

For further information about these statistics, contact Sandra Lowry on Darwin (08) 8943 2171.

W. McLennan

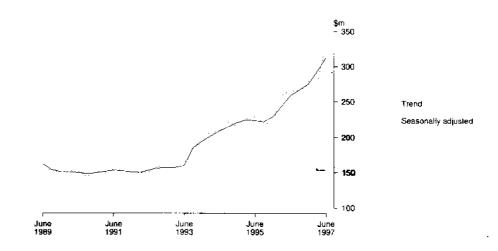
Australian Statistician

MINERAL EXPLORATION EXPENDITURE (other than for petroleum)

TREND ESTIMATES

The upward trend in exploration expenditure since the June quarter 1993 continued in the June quarter 1997.

Between the March and the June quarters 1997, the trend estimate increased by 7.0% (\$20.4m) to \$313.1m. With growth continuing each quarter during 1996–97, the trend estimate for the June quarter 1997 was 20.7% higher than for the June quarter 1996.



States and Territories

With the exception of the Northern Territory, where the trend series fell \$1.0m (4.5%), and Victoria, down \$0.4m (3.3%), the trend estimates for all other States showed increases in the June quarter 1997. Western Australia experienced the largest increase, up \$11.9m, in the June quarter 1997 to \$188.2m. South Australia showed the greatest percentage increase up 35.1%.

Metres drilled

The trend estimate for total metres drilled also continued to increase in the June quarter 1997, up 7.9% from the March quarter 1997 to 3.5 million metres, following an increase of 7.3% in the March quarter 1997.

1996-97 ESTIMATES

Total mineral exploration expenditure for the 1996–97 financial year was \$1.157.0m, an increase of \$196.8m (20.5%) from 1995–96. Exploration for gold accounted for 62.8% of total expenditure. Expenditure on gold exploration increased by 32.9% to \$726.9m in 1996–97.

Exploration for all other minerals increased from last financial year, with the exception of base metals (copper, silver-lead-zinc, nickel and cobalt) where expenditure fell by 14.0%. Tin; tungsten, scheelite and wolfram remained unchanged.

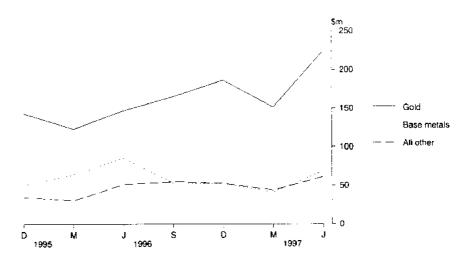
JUNE QUARTER

In seasonally adjusted terms, there was an increase of 20.5% in mineral exploration expenditure in the June quarter 1997, to \$331.6m, with increases reported in all states, and a slight fall in the Northern Territory.

In original terms, mineral exploration expenditure reported for the June quarter 1997 was \$355.6m, an increase of \$120.0m (50.9%) from the March quarter 1997. This increase was \$70.7m (24.8%) higher than the \$284.9m reported for the June quarter 1996.

For the June quarter 1997, exploration expenditure on production leases increased by \$49.6m (86.1%) to \$107.2m from \$57.6m reported for the March quarter 1997. Expenditure on production leases was \$46.3m (76.0%) higher than in the June quarter 1996. Expenditure on all other areas also rose from the March to June quarters 1997, up \$70.3m (39.5%) to \$248.3m. This was \$24.3m (10.8%) higher than \$224.0m reported in the June quarter 1996.

Gold continued as the predominant mineral sought, with \$224.5m spent on exploration during the June quarter 1997, accounting for 63.1% of all mineral exploration expenditure. Exploration for gold increased by \$74.4m (49.6%) from the March quarter 1997, and was \$77.1m (52.3%) more than the \$147.4m reported for the June quarter 1996.



All commodities recorded increases in exploration expenditure during the June quarter 1997, with base metals (copper, silver-lead-zinc, nickel and cobalt) up \$27.7m (66.3%), coal up \$6.8m (43.3%), diamonds up \$3.9m (33.3%), uranium up \$2.9m (131.8%), iron ore up \$2.7m (40.9%), other minerals up \$1.0m (25%), construction materials up \$0.1m (100%), mineral sands up \$0.1m (2.9%) and tin, tungsten, scheelite, wolfram up \$0.4m (400%).

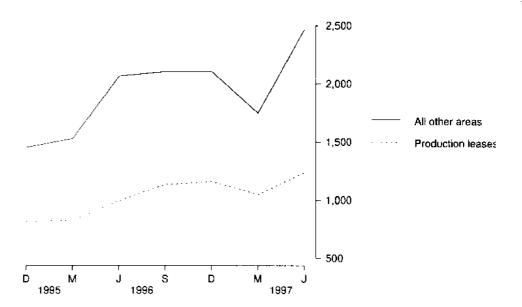
METRES DRILLED

A total of 12.8 million metres were drilled during the 1996–97 financial year. This is the highest yearly drilling figure since the series commenced and represents a 21.8% increase from 1995–96.

The seasonally adjusted estimate of 3.7 million metres was an increase of 9.0% for the March quarter 1997.

In original terms, a total of 3.7 million metres were drilled in the June quarter 1997. This was 0.9 million metres (33.9%) more than for the March quarter 1997 and 0.6 million metres (20.8%) more than in the June quarter 1996.

Drilling on production leases accounted for an increase of 0.2 million metres (21.1%) from the March quarter 1997, while drilling on all other areas increased by 0.7 million metres (41.5%) for the same period.



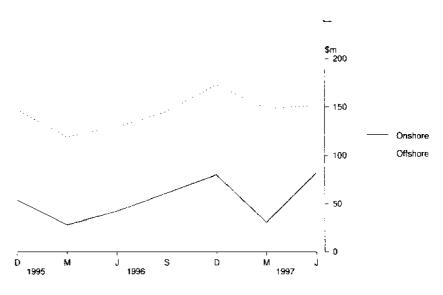
PETROLEUM EXPLORATION EXPENDITURE

OVERVIEW

Total expenditure on petroleum exploration for 1996–97 was \$871.7m, an increase of 20.2% from 1995–96. Onshore exploration increased by \$79.7m (45.6%) to \$254.5m and offshore exploration expenditure rose \$66.8m (12.1%) to \$617.1m.

For the June quarter 1997, total expenditure on petroleum exploration was \$233.8m. This was an increase of \$56.5m (31.9%) from the March quarter 1997 and 36% higher than for the June quarter 1996.

In percentage terms the greatest increase reported for the June quarter 1997 was for expenditure on production leases, a rise of 95.9% (\$16.5m) from the March quarter 1997 and 49.1% higher than the June quarter 1996. Expenditure on all other areas also increased from \$160.1m to \$200.1m, an increase of \$40.0m (25%) during the same period. Onshore exploration expenditure increased by \$51.6m (168.1%) to \$82.3m in the June quarter 1997. This is 94% higher than in the June quarter 1996. Offshore exploration expenditure rose \$5.0m (3.4%) to \$151.5m in the June quarter 1997 and was 17.0% higher than for the June quarter 1996.



REGIONAL DATA

Regional data are available only for Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, Northern Territory/Ashmore and Cartier Islands and the Zone of Cooperation (Area A) for the June quarter 1997.

Exploration expenditure in Queensland increased by 260% to \$45.0m in the June quarter 1997. This was double the expenditure for the corresponding quarter in 1996. In Western Australia, expenditure rose by 29.3% to \$101.5m, 26.4% higher than in the June quarter 1996.

Western Australia accounted for the majority of expenditure with 43.4% of total petroleum exploration expenditure in the June quarter 1997.

	MINERAL EXPLORATION				LEUM ONSH	ORE	PETRO	PETROLEUM OFFSHORE			
	Actual	Expected(a)	Actual as a proportion of expected	Actual	Expected(a)	Actual as a proportion of expected	Actual	Expected(a)	Actual as a proportion of expected		
Period	\$m	\$m	%	\$ m	\$m	%	\$m	\$m	%		
	* * * * * * *	Y 5 D M 2 B 4 4 A	~ * * * * * * * * * *		******		* * * * * * * *	· · · · · · · · ·			
1994-95	893.3	768.8	116.2	170.8	120.3	142.0	511.7	592.1	86.4		
1995-96	960.2	773.6	124.1	174.8	185.6	94.2	550.3	428.0	128.6		
1996-97	1 157.0	808.9	143.0	254.5	206.2	123.4	617.1	446.6	138.2		
Six months ended											
June 1996	503.8	401.3	125.5	70.4	101.2	69.6	249.3	220.4	113.1		
December 1996	r565.8	361.8	156.4	141.5	91.2	155.2	319.1	207.9	153.5		
June 199 7	591.2	447.1	132.2	113.0	115.0	98.3	298.0	238.7	124.8		
December 1997	n.y.a.	499.1	n.y.a.	л.у.а,	84.3	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	359.8	п.у.а.		

⁽a) As reported in previous collections. Refer to Explanatory Notes paragraph 13.

	EXPENDIT	URE				METRES DRILLED						
	On production leases	On all other areas	Total	Seasonally adjusted	Trend estimate	On production l ea ses	On all other areas	Total	Seasonally adjusted	Trend estimate		
Period	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	'000 m	'000 m	'000 m	000 m	'000 m		

1994-95	202.5	690.7	893.3			3 329	7 001	10 330				
1995-96	208.8	751.5	960.2			3 520	6 995	10 514				
19 96 –97	305.9	851.0	1 157.0			4 457	8 351	12 808				
1995												
September qtr	46.2	180.9	227.1	221.0	222.6	866	1 933	2 79 9	2 580	2 625		
December qtr	47.1	182.2	229.3	218.6	229.1	824	1 458	2 282	2 119	2 707		
19 96												
March qtr	54.6	164.4	219.0	259.1	243.5	832	1 533	2 364	2 860	2 847		
June qtr	60.9	224.0	284.9	266.1	259.5	998	2 071	3 069	3 030	2 946		
September qtr	73.0	201.2	274.2	266.6	266.8	1 138	2 110	3 248	2 99 6	2 963		
December qtr	68.1	223.5	291.6	279.2	275.3	1 062	2 025	3 086	2 868	3 063		
1997									-			
March qtr	r57.6	r178.0	r235.6	275.1	292.7	r1 021	r1 746	r2 768	3 351	3 288		
June qtr	107.2	248.3	355.6	331.6	313.1	1 236	2 470	3 706	3 654	3 548		

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Australia
Period	\$m	\$m	\$ m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$rm
				RIGINAL	» » * « » * » » •	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •		
				THOMPS				
1994-95	79.2	31.2	176.0	20.9	495.5	14.9	75.8	893.3
1995-96	80.3	42.6	181.0	24.1	519.5	18.7	93.9	960.2
1996-97	94.4	52.3	161.7	41.6	690.1	26.0	90.7	1 1 57.0
1995								
September qtr	20.5	8.2	43.8	5.6	125.0	2.5	21.6	227.1
December qtr	17.7	11.5	39.4	6.6	128.9	5.6	19.5	229.3
1996			33.1	5.5		3.5	10.0	220.0
March gtr	19.2	10.1	40.9	5.1	118.6	6.0	19.1	219.0
June atr	23.0	12.8	56.9	6.8	147.0	4.7	33.7	284.9
September qtr	21.1	14.9	38.3	5.4	162.8	4.2	27.5	274.2
December qtr	20.6	14.1	45.1	8.0	173,1	5.7	25.0	291.6
1997	20.0	17.1	43.1	0.0	1,0,1	3.7	20.0	291.0
March gtr	22.0	9.6	r31.6	7.2	144.2	r6.0	14.8 -	r235.6
June qtr	30.7	13.7	46.7	21.0	210.0	10.1	23.4	3 5 5.6
	,							
			SEASON/	ALLY ADJUST	ED			
1995								
September qtr	21.0	8.6	42.3	5.8	121.3	3.1	19.0	221.0
December qtr	18.0	11.2	34.6	6.1	124.2	5.9	18.6	218.6
1 996							-	
March qtr	20.3	10.1	52.0	6.1	138.1	5.0	27.6	259.1
June qtr	20.9	12.8	54.7	6.1	137.1	4.5	29.9	266.1
September qtr	21.5	15.5	37.0	5.6	157.8	5.2	24.1	266.6
December qtr	21.3	13.7	39 .7	7.4	167.0	6.0	24.1	279.2
1997								
March qtr	23.0	9.6	40.0	8.5	16 7.7	5.0	21.3	275.1
June qtr	27.8	13.7	44.9	18.8	19 5.9	9.8	20.8	331.6
		* * • • • • •	* * * * * * * * * * *				• • • • • • • • •	
1995				TREND				
September qtr	20.2	9.4	39.8	6.0	123.8	4.5	18.9	222.6
December qu	20.2 19.5	9.4 9.9	39.8 43.1	6.0	123.8	4.5 4.9	18.9 19.4	222.6
1996	19.5	9.9	43.1	6.0	126.3	4.9	19.4	229.1
	40.0	44.3	47 5	6.0	122.0	FO	24.0	042.5
March qtr	19.8	11.3	47.5	6.0	132.9	5.0	21.0	243.5
June qtr	20.6	13.1	48.2	5.9	143.6	5.1	23.0	259.5
September qtr	21.1	13.8	43.7	5.7	153.6	4.9	24.0	266.8
December qtr	22.0	13.2	39.6	7.4	164.3	5.5	23.3	275.3
1997	ob o	40.5	10.1		430.0	o -	20.4	000 -
March qtr	23.9	12.2	40.4	11.1	176.3	6.7	22.1	292.7
June qtr	25.7	11.8	43.3	15.0	188.2	8.0	21.1	313.1

	Copper, silver-lead-zinc, nicket and cobalt	Gold	lron ore	Mineral sands	Tin, tungsten, scheelite and wolfram	Uranium	Coal	Construction materials	Diamonds	Other	Total	
State/Territory	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	

JUNE QUARTER 1997												
New South Wales	9.5	12.9	_	n.p.	ń.p.		6.6	_	n.p.	0.4	30.7	
Victoria	n.p.	10.0	_	n.p.	<u>.</u>	_	n.p.	_	n.p.	п.р.	13.7	
Queensland	13.8	15.6	_	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	14.2	n.p.	n.p.	1.6	46.7	
South Australia	8.8	10.5	п.р.		<u>.</u>	n.p.	_	_	0.6	0.4	21.0	
Western Australia	27.0	155.5	9.3	2.6	n.p.	п.р.	π.p.	n.p.	10.8	2.6	210.0	
Tasmania	n.p.	6.5	_	n.p.	n.p.	_	л.р.	n.p.	_	_	10.1	
Northern Territory	5.2	13.6	n.p.	_	,	1.5	· -	n.p.	3.0	ń.p.	23.4	
Australia	69.5	224.5	9.3	3.5	0.4	5.1	22.5	0.2	15.6	5.0	355.6	
	* « » * • • « « « »	· · · · · ·			AUSTRALIA	* * * * · × *	* * * • •		* * * # * * * *	/ » + w s		
1994– 9 5	201.0	554.5	12.1	5.8	1.1	7.8	38.0	0.9	48.4	23.5	893.3	
1995–96	251.8	547.1	14.1	9.3	0.6	7.2	52.6	0.7	52.9	23.8	960.2	
1996–97	216.6	726.9	25.8	13.9	0.6	13.0	70.5	0.9	59.3	29.4	1 157.0	
1995												
September gtr	50.8	132 .7	4.9	2.1	0.1	2.1	12.7	0.6	15.3	5.9	227.1	
December atr	50.5	143.7	1.1	1,6	0.2	2.3	12.1	_	11.9	5.9	229.3	
1996												
March gtr	64.7	123.3	3.6	2.0	n.p.	n.p.	10.8	_	8.4	4.4	219.0	
June qtr	85.8	147.4	4.5	3.6	п.р.	n.p.	17.1	0.1	17.3	7.8	284.9	
September qtr	53.2	165.5	6.1	3.3	0.2	3.8	15.4	0.5	15.6	10.5	274.2	
December gtr	52.1	186.8	3.8	3.7	0.0	1.9	16.9	0.1	16.4	9.9	291.6	
1997												
March qtr	r41.8	r150.1	r6.6	3.4	0.0	2.2	15.7	0.1	11.7	4.0	r235.6	
June qtr	69.5	224.5	9.3	3.5	0.4	5.1	22.5	0.2	15.6	5.0	355.6	

	ONSHORE			OFFSHO	RE		TOTAL EXPENDITURE			
	Drilling	Other	Total	Drilling	Other	Total	On production leases	On all other areas	Total	
Period	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$ m	\$m	\$m	
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *				*******	****	* * 5 4 5 4 5	* * * * * * * * * * *	» « » · · ·		
1994-95	88.2	82.6	170.8	377.3	134.4	511.7	105.0	577.3	682.5	
1 9959 6	95.5	79.4	174.8	367.1	183.2	550.3	78.8	646.5	725.1	
19 96 –97	182.2	72.3	254.5	421.1	196.1	617.1	140.3	731.4	871.7	
1995										
September qtr	30.9	19.2	50.0	120.4	32.8	153.2	17.7	185.6	203.2	
December qtr	28.7	25.6	54.3	103.9	44.0	147.9	19.6	182.7	202.2	
1996										
March qtr	13.6	14.5	28.1	68.1	51.6	119.7	18.9	128.9	147.8	
June qtr	22.3	20.1	42.4	74.7	54.8	129.5	22.6	149.3	171.9	
September qtr	38.9	22.3	61.2	120.4	25.4	145.8	34.8	172.2	207.0	
December qtr	63.9	16.4	80.3	121.1	52.3	173.3	54.6	199.0	253.6	
1 9 97							-			
March qtr	22.3	8.4	30.7	96.3	r50.2	r146.5	17.2	r 160.1	r177.3	
June qtr	57.1	25.2	82.3	83.3	68.2	151.5	33.7	200.1	233.8	

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia(a)	Tasmania	Northern Territory/ Ashmore and Cartier Islands	Zone of Cooperation Area A(b)	Total
Period	\$ m	\$m	\$ m	\$ m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
					• • • • • • • •	• • • • • •			
199495	n.p.	n.p.	82.7	46.7	345.6	п.р.	55.9	89.4	682.5
1995– 96	n.p.	n.p.	106.5	55.1	319.0	n.p.	96.3	89.2	725.1
1996–97	n.p.	n.p.	134.5	n.p.	444.1	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	871.7
1995									
September qtr	n.p.	n.p.	34.5	18.3	88.5	n.p.	17.0	20.4	203.2
December qtr	n.p.	n.p.	32.8	13.8	75.7	_	45.8	21.3	202.2
1996									
March qtr	n.p.	n.p.	16.7	9.6	74.6	_	17.4	18.2	147.8
June qtr	n.p.	n.p.	22.5	13.4	80.3	_	16.0	29.4	171.9
September qtr	n.p.	n.p.	36.4	22.7	131.5	_	2.5	7.4	207.0
December qtr	n.p.	n.p.	40.6	n.p.	132.6	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	253.6
1997	•								
March gtr	n.p.	n,p,	12.5	n.p.	78.5	n.p.	n.p.	30.1	r177.3
June qtr	n.p.	6.7	45.0	n.p.	101.5	n.p.	15.8	35.0	233.8

⁽a) Includes expenditure on Western Australian leases in the Zone of Cooperation Area B.

⁽b) Refer to Explanatory Notes paragraph 14.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

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

SOURCE

2 Data are collected and compiled from 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, in Australia (including Australian waters) and incurring expenditure of more than \$20,000 per year.

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

- **4** Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences can be more clearly recognised.
- **5** Seasonal adjustment does not remove from the series the effect of irregular or non-seasonal influences. Particular care should be taken in interpreting quarterly movements in the adjusted figures in this publication.
- **6** Irregular influences that are highly volatile can make it difficult to interpret the series even after adjustment for seasonal variation.
- **7** Seasonal factors are reviewed and revised annually to take account of each additional year's original data. The nature of the seasonal adjustment process is such that the magnitude of some revisions resulting from the re-analysis may be quite significant, especially for data for more recent quarters. For this reason, additional care should be exercised when interpreting movements in scasonally adjusted data for recent quarters.

TREND ESTIMATES

8 The trend estimates are derived by applying a 7-term Henderson moving average to the seasonally adjusted series. The 7-term Henderson average (like all Henderson averages) is symmetric but, as the end of a time series is approached, asymmetric forms of the average are applied. Unlike the weights of the standard 7-term Henderson moving average, the weights employed here have been tailored to suit particular characteristics of the individual series. While the asymmetric weights enable trend estimates for recent quarters to be produced, it does result in revisions to the estimates for the most recent three quarters as additional observations become available. There may also be revisions because of changes in the original data and as a result of the re-estimation of the seasonal factors. For further information, see *Information Paper: A Guide to Interpreting Time Series — Monitoring Trends, an Overview* (Cat. no. 1348.0) or contact the Assistant Director, Time Series Analysis on Canberra (02) 6252 6345.

CLASSIFICATIONS

- **9** The following categories are used:
- Production lease/Other, where a production lease is an area on which production or development is actually taking place.
- 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 and Territory Governments.
- 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

- **10** Minerals: In the broad sense these comprise metallic minerals, construction materials, gemstones, other non-metallic minerals and petroleum (oil or gas).
- 11 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.
- **12** 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.
- **13** 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.
- **14** Zone of Cooperation (ZOC): Is an agreement between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on an area between the Indonesian Province of East Timor and Northern Australia. The ZOC is divided into three areas: A, B and C. Area A is controlled by a joint authority and all petroleum operations in this area are carried out through production sharing contracts. Area B is controlled by Australian authorities but the Republic of Indonesia must be notified of any changes to tenements in the area and be paid 10% of gross Resource Rent Tax collected by Australia from corporations producing petroleum. Area C is controlled by the Republic of Indonesia but Australia must be notified of any changes to tenements in the area and be paid 10% of Contractors Income Tax collected by the Republic of Indonesia from corporations producing petroleum.
- **15** Ashmore and Cartier Islands: Tenements in the Ashmore and Cartier Islands are administered by the Northern Territory Department of Mines and Energy. Therefore all petroleum exploration expenditure in this area has been included with Northern Territory data.

EXPLANATORY NOTES continued

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

16 Users may also wish to refer to the following priced publications which are available on request:

Australian Business Expectations (Cat. no. 5250.0)

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Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia (Cat. no. 5625.0)

- **17** Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (Cat. no. 1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (Cat. no.1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.
- **18** 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.

EFFECTS OF ROUNDING

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

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