

Reference No. 10.76

PETROLEUM EXPLORATION
MARCH QUARTER 1976



EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This bulletin contains quarterly statistics of metres drilled and expenditure on petroleum exploration in Australia. More detailed information on petroleum exploration on an annual basis is included in *Mineral Exploration, 1974-75* (Reference No. 10.41). Quarterly statistics of mineral exploration in Australia, excluding petroleum, are available in *Mineral Exploration* (other than for petroleum), (Reference No. 10.75).

Sources of data

2. Details of quarterly expenditure are obtained directly by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Details of annual calendar year expenditure for past years and of metres drilled each quarter are provided by the Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics.

Scope

3. Details of expenditure and metres drilled relate to all private and public undertakings known to be engaged in petroleum exploration activity.

Definitions -

4. *Exploration* consists of the search for undiscovered oil or gas, and/or appraisal intended to greatly extend the limits of a known oil or gas reservoir by geological, geophysical, geochemical and other exploration methods including drilling. Activity of a developmental or production nature is excluded.

5. *Exploration expenditure* excludes payments made under the *Petroleum Search Subsidy Act 1959-1973*. Details of these payments are shown in footnote (a), Table 1.

Classification

6. The data obtained are classified into the following categories:

- (i) *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.
- (ii) *Offshore/Onshore*, where offshore includes all operations in a marine area under the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1967-1973* or under any Acts administered by State governments.
- (iii) *Private/Government*, where government relates to exploration for petroleum carried out by: State Mines Departments, public enterprises operated by State and local government authorities, the Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics, and when applicable, the Department of Administrative Services, the Petroleum and Minerals Authority and the Division of National Mapping.

Anticipated exploration expenditure

7. *Anticipated expenditure* represents the expenditures anticipated at the beginning of the half year. Subsequent events (e.g. discoveries of new reservoirs, unexpected weather conditions, unforeseen changes in economic conditions) may cause actual expenditures to differ from those anticipated.

Seasonal adjustment

8. Seasonally adjusted statistics are NOT shown in this bulletin. When a sufficient number of observations to estimate the seasonal variations (if any) are available, seasonally adjusted series may be included. In the meantime, the user of these statistics is cautioned against making quarter to quarter comparisons of the statistics without realising that such comparisons may be affected by seasonality in the series.

Rounding

9. Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in tables are due to rounding.

NOTE. Enquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning Mr Brian Thorp on 52 5631 or, in each State capital by telephoning the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

TABLE 1. - EXPENDITURE (a) ON PETROLEUM EXPLORATION, AUSTRALIA - ACTUAL AND ANTICIPATED
(\$ million)

Period	Onshore			Offshore			Total Expenditure
	Drilling	Other	Total	Drilling	Other	Total	
PRIVATE							
Actual expenditure							
Quarter ended -							
1974-75							
September	1.4	2.7	4.0	16.7	4.9	21.6	25.6
December	n.a.	n.a.	3.7	12.3	6.6	19.0	22.8
March	n.a.	n.a.	2.5	10.8	3.9	14.7	17.2
June	1.7	2.4	4.1	10.0	2.6	12.5	16.6
1975-76							
September	n.a.	n.a.	5.6	6.8	3.2	9.9	15.5
December	n.a.	n.a.	5.6	n.a.	n.a.	10.4	15.9
March	n.a.	n.a.	4.2	n.a.	n.a.	7.7	11.9
Anticipated expenditure (b)							
Six months ended -							
June 1975							36.0
December 1975							34.1
June 1976							27.1
GOVERNMENT							
Actual expenditure ,							
Quarter ended -							
1974-75							
September	0.1	0.6	0.7	..	0.2	0.2	1.0
December	0.2	0.8	0.9	..	0.3	0.3	1.2
March	0.1	0.6	0.7	..	0.2	0.2	0.9
June	0.2	0.8	0.9	..	0.3	0.3	1.2
1975-76							
September	0.2	0.7	0.9	..	0.3	0.3	1.2
December	0.2	0.6	0.8	..	0.5	0.5	1.3
March	0.2	0.7	0.8	..	0.3	0.3	1.1
Anticipated expenditure (b)							
Six months ended -							
June 1975							1.9
December 1975							2.1
June 1976							2.1
TOTAL EXPENDITURE							
Actual expenditure							
Quarter ended -							
1974-75							
September	1.5	3.2	4.6	16.7	5.2	21.9	26.5
December	n.a.	n.a.	4.6	12.3	7.0	19.3	23.9
March	n.a.	n.a.	3.2	10.8	4.1	14.9	18.1
June	1.8	3.2	5.0	10.0	2.9	12.9	17.8
1975-76							
September	n.a.	n.a.	6.5	6.8	3.5	10.3	16.8
December	n.a.	n.a.	6.4	n.a.	n.a.	10.9	17.2
March	n.a.	n.a.	5.0	n.a.	n.a.	8.0	13.0
Anticipated expenditure (b)							
Six months ended -							
June 1975							37.9
December 1975							36.2
June 1976							29.2

(a) Expenditures made under the *Petroleum Search Subsidy Act 1959-1973* are excluded; total payments under the Act for the quarters covered by the survey were: September 1974 - \$1.7m; December 1974 - \$1.3m; March 1975 - \$1.0m; June 1975 - \$1.9m; September 1975 - \$1.1m. (b) Details are collected only in respect of total anticipated expenditure.

n.a. - not available.

TABLE 2. - ANNUAL EXPENDITURE (a) ON PETROLEUM EXPLORATION, AUSTRALIA (b)
(\$ million)

Year	Private Onshore			Private Offshore			Total Private	Government (c)	Total Expenditure
	Drilling	Other	Total	Drilling	Other	Total			
1969	9.3	9.4	18.7	37.0	11.1	48.1	66.7	4.5	71.2
1970	8.1	10.3	18.4	44.3	11.3	55.6	74.0	3.7	77.7
1971	11.4	9.8	21.3	42.4	9.2	51.6	72.9	4.4	77.3
1972	11.4	8.3	19.8	61.1	16.6	77.7	97.5	4.5	102.0
1973	8.9	6.0	14.9	57.0	13.7	70.7	85.6	4.9	90.5
1974	5.3	6.2	11.5	65.0	6.9	71.9	83.4	4.5	87.9
1974-75	4.9	8.9	13.9	49.8	18.1	67.9	81.7	4.4	86.1

(a) Expenditures made under the *Petroleum Starch Subsidy Act* 1959-73 are excluded. (b) Source of calendar year statistics: Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics. Source of fiscal year statistics: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (c) Separate details for onshore/offshore and drilling/other are not available for government expenditure. Minor government expenditure in Papua New Guinea is included prior to 1973.

TABLE 3. - PETROLEUM EXPLORATION - METRES DRILLED, AUSTRALIA
(Source: Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics)
(^{000 metres})

Year	Onshore			Offshore (a)	Total Metres Drilled
	Private	State government	Total		
1969	127.9	1.6	129.5	76.4	205.9
1970	139.2	1.2	140.4	68.2	208.6
1971	108.2	0.4	108.6	59.9	168.5
1972	107.0	..	107.0	117.4	224.4
1973	52.7	..	52.7	87.9	140.5
1974	30.5	3.7	34.2	87.1	121.3
1974-75	4.6	1.8	6.4	53.9	60.4
Quarter ended -					
1974-75					
September	1.2	1.8	3.0	17.3	20.4
December	2.0	..	2.0	14.4	16.4
March	..	..	..	15.5	15.5
June	1.6	..	1.6	6.7	8.3
1975-76					
September	6.6	..	6.6	6.7	13.3
December	4.5	..	4.5	6.7	11.3
March	2.9	..	2.9	5.0	7.8

(a) Petroleum exploration drilling offshore has been undertaken only by the private sector.

R. W. COLE
Australian Statistician