

ACTUAL AND EXPECTED PRIVATE MINERAL EXPLORATION, AUSTRALIA DECEMBER QUARTER 1992

MAIN FEATURES

Mineral exploration (other than for petroleum)

Exploration expenditure for the December quarter 1992 totalled \$174.6 million; the largest expenditure figure since the December quarter 1988. An increase of \$13.7 million or 8.5 per cent over the previous quarter is due largely to increases in expenditure in Western Australia (\$5.1 million) and New South Wales (\$4.9 million), with all other States recording increases of lesser amounts.

Expenditure on most minerals decreased, but this was more than offset by large increases in expenditure on Base Metals (up \$10.3 million) and Gold (up \$8.3 million). The only other category to record an increase was Mineral Sands (up \$0.7 million).

Drilling activity mirrored the increases shown in expenditure with metres drilled exceeding 2 million metres for the first time since the September quarter 1988. Drilling on production leases increased by 6.1 per cent to 524 thousand metres and drilling on all other areas increased by 29.1 per cent to 1,477 thousand metres. This adds up to an overall increase of 22.2 per cent; from 1,638 thousand metres in the

September quarter 1992 to 2,001 thousand metres in the December quarter 1992.

Petroleum exploration

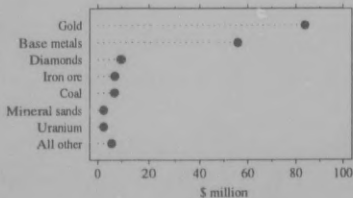
Expenditure on petroleum exploration in the December quarter 1992 increased by \$46.4 million to \$186.6 million. This was 33.1 per cent higher than the level of the September quarter 1992, but only 7.7 per cent higher than the December quarter 1991.

Expenditure on production leases fell slightly to \$21.3 million, although this was still higher than the \$20.2 million recorded in December quarter 1991. Expenditure on all other areas increased to \$165.4 million which is a 39.5 per cent increase over the previous quarter.

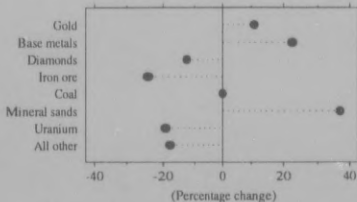
Onshore exploration expenditure fell by \$0.6 million, however, offshore exploration expenditure rose by \$47.0 million to \$152.6 million. There has been a steady increase in petroleum exploration expenditure over the four quarters in the 1992 calendar year. Expected expenditure for the six months ended June 1993 is \$267.4 million.

MINERAL EXPLORATION EXPENDITURE BY TYPE OF MINERAL SOUGHT

December quarter 1992



Percentage change, September qtr 1992 to December qtr 1992



INQUIRIES

- for further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Ted Lanyon on Adelaide (08) 237 7649 or any ABS office.
- for information about other ABS statistics and services please contact Information Services on Canberra (06) 252 6627, 252 5402, 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	326.6	111.8
1991-92	604.0	466.5	129.5	135.3	191.3	70.7	338.8	344.0	98.5
1992-93	n.y.a.			..					
Six months ended									
December 1991	317.7	222.3	142.9	82.4	133.4	61.8	191.9	197.0	97.4
June 1992	286.3	244.3	117.2	52.9	57.9	91.4	146.9	147.0	99.9
December 1992	335.5	257.0	130.5	68.6	70.3	97.6	258.2	231.8	111.4
June 1993	n.y.a.	275.8	..	n.y.a.	60.8	..	n.y.a.	206.6	..

(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
1986-87	115.2	441.6	556.8	1,169	3,794	4,963
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
1991-92 —						
September quarter	30.5	123.0	153.4	358	1,366	1,723
December quarter	35.2	129.0	164.2	452	1,005	1,457
March quarter	32.0	93.4	125.3	427	772	1,198
June quarter	33.2	127.8	161.0	389	1,110	1,499
1992-93 —						
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

(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
1986-87	47.6	15.5	120.6	11.0	323.3	10.9	27.9	556.8
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
1991-92 —								
September quarter	14.1	2.7	26.7	4.8	87.9	2.6	14.5	153.4
December quarter	17.8	2.5	31.5	6.6	88.1	1.9	15.7	164.2
March quarter	15.5	3.7	20.8	3.3	69.3	1.9	10.8	125.3
June quarter	15.9	3.7	31.0	4.9	87.4	1.4	16.7	161.0
1992-93 —								
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

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 4.

TABLE 4. MINERAL EXPLORATION (OTHER THAN FOR PETROLEUM)
EXPENDITURE BY TYPE OF MINERAL SOUGHT BY STATE, DECEMBER QUARTER 1992
(\$ 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	12.7	3.7	—	0.5	—	n.p.	1.8	n.p.	0.1	1.3	20.3
Victoria	1.2	1.9	—	n.p.	n.p.	—	—	—	n.p.	n.p.	3.4
Queensland	16.1	10.8	—	0.5	n.p.	n.p.	5.1	—	n.p.	1.7	34.5
South Australia	4.0	0.2	—	n.p.	—	0.6	—	—	n.p.	0.9	5.9
Western Australia	17.3	56.3	7.2	1.2	—	0.9	0.3	—	7.6	0.9	91.6
Tasmania	1.3	0.3	—	—	—	—	—	n.p.	—	n.p.	1.7
Northern Territory	3.3	10.7	—	n.p.	—	0.7	—	—	1.6	n.p.	17.2
Australia	55.9	83.8	7.2	2.6	0.1	2.5	7.1	0.3	9.6	5.5	174.6

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
1986-87	76.9	357.4	11.6	7.3	3.0	22.0	36.6	3.3	17.2	21.6	556.8
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
1991-92 —											
September quarter	38.9	79.4	8.0	3.3	0.3	3.4	5.4	0.8	10.3	3.7	153.4
December quarter	40.2	79.4	12.4	3.9	0.6	4.1	6.3	0.3	8.9	8.1	164.2
March quarter	25.1	67.8	6.3	3.2	0.4	2.1	8.3	0.3	6.0	5.8	125.3
June quarter	40.7	78.1	10.2	3.5	0.4	3.2	7.5	0.2	10.5	6.7	161.0
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

(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
1986-87	69.7	101.3	171.0	78.5	55.7	134.1	51.3	253.9	305.2
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
1991-92 —									
September quarter	18.5	17.7	36.2	31.5	33.2	64.8	24.4	76.5	100.9
December quarter	21.4	24.9	46.2	67.4	59.7	127.1	20.2	153.1	173.3
March quarter	11.5	16.0	27.4	15.0	54.8	69.9	9.4	87.9	97.2
June quarter	9.1	16.4	25.5	28.3	48.7	77.0	16.4	86.1	102.5
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

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 exercises 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 comprise metallic minerals, construction materials, gemstones, other non-metallic minerals, oil shale and petroleum (oil or gas).

7. *Exploration*. 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*. 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

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

13. The figures shown in this publication have been revised where necessary and as a consequence may not agree with similar data shown in previous publications.

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

Electronic services

DISCOVERY Key *656# for selected current economic, social and demographic statistics.

PC-AUSSTATS Thousands of up-to-date time series are available on this ABS on-line service through CSIRONET. For further information phone the PC-AUSSTATS Help Desk on (06) 252 6017.

TELESTATS This service provides foreign trade statistics tailored to users' requirements. Further information is available on (06) 252 5404.

Floppy disk service

15. Selected ABS statistics are available on floppy disk. Further information is available on (06) 252 6684.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician



2084120012929

ISSN 1033-0542