



CEO comment



Neil Williams – CEO Geoscience Australia



This issue of *AusGeo News* features several articles relating to Geoscience Australia's programs to provide pre-competitive information to support industry's search for new offshore and onshore energy resources, our marine research to help characterise and protect Australia's valuable marine environment and our contributions to the mitigation of the effects of natural hazards.

There is a report on the first of the scientific marine reconnaissance surveys in the remote eastern frontiers area of Australia's Economic Exclusion Zone which is an important part of our offshore frontier basin research to identify a new oil province. The survey captured high-resolution data covering the entire survey region. The seabed mapping will provide data for an assessment of marine habitats and biota whilst subsurface imaging will be available to enable industry to assess the petroleum potential of selected basin areas.

Another major article examines the factors controlling formation of the world-class sandstone uranium deposits in south-central Kazakhstan. Hydrocarbons seem to have played a crucial role in the formation of these and other large sandstone-type uranium deposits. This research may point to the potential for the discovery of large sandstone-hosted uranium mineralization in Australia where only two per cent of our known uranium resources are in sandstone deposits.

Time information is fundamental to most geological studies, particularly resource exploration, because the date of a geological process can be crucial to assessing its potential to form mineral deposits. Although the quantitative measure of time is natural radioactive decay each of the isotopic decay measures in common use has specific advantages and limitations. The article on the different geological 'clocks' discusses improving synchronisation between them.

There is also a report on the marine survey off the eastern coast of New South Wales which provided valuable data and information on the seabed along the continental shelf including submarine landslides. The information gathered will also assist in developing models to assess the risk of tsunamis along the Australian coastline.

There is also an overview of the recently released Natural Hazards in Australia: Identifying Risk Analysis Requirements which provides the first consistent and consolidated view of the issues relating to

assessing the risk. The report was developed with input from over 20 authors from private companies through to state and Australian Government agencies and should meet the needs of emergency managers for years to come.

Natural Hazards Online is another valuable product for emergency managers and decision makers involved in emergency management. The website consolidates, for the first time, the broad range of information, data, maps, models and decision support tools available about natural hazards. Other new products reported on include new geophysical datasets covering areas in Queensland (Mt Isa and the Cooper Basin), the Northern Territory (Tanumbirini) and northeast Tasmania as well as the new topographic General Reference Map of Australia at 1:5 million scale.

As usual we always appreciate your feedback and encourage you to use the online rating mechanism with each article.