



CEO comment



Neil Williams – CEO Geoscience Australia



Geoscience Australia's scientists have identified rocks from South Australia's Eyre Peninsula which are over 3 billion years old. As our report points out, the significance of this find is that rocks of this age are uncommon and difficult to find and were previously thought to be restricted to areas in the Pilbara and Yilgarn Craton regions of Western Australia. The rocks were collected as part of a collaborative seismic survey by Geoscience Australia and Primary Industries and Resources South Australia.

This issue includes reports on several significant outputs and the current activities of Geoscience Australia's Offshore and Onshore Energy Security Programs which provide pre-competitive information to support mineral and energy resource exploration. The Southwest Margins Project includes a seismic survey and a marine reconnaissance survey which are currently under way along the coast of southwest Western Australia. The survey will acquire new geophysical data as well as geological samples over several frontier areas including the Wallaby Plateau, Zeewyck Sub-basin and Mentelle Basin, as well as poorly explored areas of the southern Carnarvon Basin and northern Perth Basin. These surveys will contribute to an assessment of the petroleum prospectivity, geological setting and environmental significance of these areas.

The new Radiometric Map of Australia is part of a range of digital radiometric products which will directly assist exploration for uranium and thorium as well as heat flow studies and the assessment of geothermal resources. Processed data from the Australia-wide airborne geophysical survey completed in 2007 was used to adjust all the radiometric data held in the National Radiometric Database to a common standard. The levelled database was then used to produce the first Radiometric Map of Australia which will be released early in 2009.

The mapping of thick sedimentary rocks in an under-explored 'frontier' basin is a significant development for onshore petroleum exploration in Australia and data from the Rankins Springs Seismic Survey in western New South Wales is now available. The data acquisition, in March 2008, was funded jointly by the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and Geoscience Australia.

I am also pleased to report that work has commenced on the surveying and collecting of gravity and seismic reflection data along the Gawler-Officer-Musgrave-Amadeus seismic traverse in South

Australia and the Northern Territory. This survey is jointly funded by Geoscience Australia, Primary Industries and Resources South Australia and AuScope, an initiative established under the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy.

This issue also reports on the Australian Landslide Database which is a virtual database which will provide a powerful landslide resource for Australia. It brings information across databases together to give users a single point of access to the latest landslide information available from several agencies across Australia.

There is also a report on a pilot project to develop a single calibrated measure of the reflectance of Earth's surface over time to assist dynamic land cover mapping. This development will capture the pattern of change in the landscape and allow the land cover to be mapped, classified and studied as a dynamic system.

Finally, I wish to thank all our readers for your continuing support and extend best wishes for the festive season and the New Year.

Neil Williams