



MEDIA RELEASE

NEW SURFACE GEOLOGY MAP BREAKS FRESH GROUND

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Australia has achieved an historic cross jurisdictional milestone with a new surface geology map of the continent that eliminates traditional State and Territory boundaries.

In a cooperative program involving the State and Northern Territory Geological Surveys, Geoscience Australia has compiled a 1:1 million scale map which extends over the whole continent and Tasmania in a seamless representation of Australia's geology.

Releasing the map today, the Chief Executive Officer of Geoscience Australia, Doctor Neil Williams, said the fully integrated depiction of features across borders will help mineral explorers and mining companies to better understand and interpret regional geology.

"There are many geological features which cross borders, such as the Great Artesian and Murray-Darling Basins with their vital groundwater resources extending over parts of six states and territories," Doctor Williams said.

"Mineral-rich provinces also cross borders, including the Curnamona region around Broken Hill on the NSW-South Australia border, the rich Mt Isa region which extends from Queensland into the Northern Territory and the untapped Musgrave region which straddles Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory," Doctor Williams said.

"In the past some geological features were confined within traditional borders because the data between adjoining jurisdictions and even within jurisdictions didn't match, particularly where maps had been produced decades apart and used very different mapping technologies," he said.

A team of geologists and cartographers at Geoscience Australia has worked since 2000 to compile the data into a single seamless national dataset by standardising and edge-matching geological maps published by State, Territory and Commonwealth agencies over the past 40 years.

The new map, which replaces the 1:2.5 million scale geological map, provides much more detailed and current information on the distribution and type of outcropping bedrock and surface deposits, or regolith, such as sand plains and dunes across the whole continent.

Doctor Williams said that the seamless content of the Surface Geology Map of Australia will be an invaluable baseline dataset for regional and national evaluation of resource potential, environmental management and land use issues.

The digital information associated with the new map will be provided to the international OneGeology project (<http://www.onegeology.org/>) as Australia's contribution to the program.

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:
Geoscience Australia 24 hour Media Hotline 1800 882 035