



Welcome to the NEW ON-LINE *AusGeo News*

In this issue we are able to bring you some of the new detailed geoscience relating to the Boxing Day tsunami, in which over 200 000 people died amid widespread destruction in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand, and on the east coast of Africa.

As a result of this tragic event, the Australian Government is now actively planning for a higher level of involvement in disaster preparedness, both within Australia and in the surrounding region. Geoscience Australia is involved in discussions with Emergency Management Australia and the Bureau of Meteorology to establish a tsunami warning system for the region. We are also playing a major role in the development of a tsunami scenario to help the Catastrophic Disasters Working Group of the Australian Emergency Management Committee to exercise Australia's emergency management capability.

Other feature articles in this issue report on the progress of Geoscience Australia's 'Big New Oil' program, which provides pre-competitive information to support industry's search for new offshore oil provinces. The program began in 2003 with the Australian Government's Budget decision to fund a vital new phase of data acquisition and preservation of the data archive. Already one hundred thousand deteriorating seismic data tapes storing hundreds of thousands of kilometres of geoscience information from many offshore basins have been remastered onto new stable media. This represents about a third of the archive, with the process on track to be completed over the next three years.

The first of the major new seismic acquisition programs—the South West Frontiers Survey—has been completed, and the data collected will be available to explorers at the cost of transfer from April 2005. This includes processed seismic lines covering the proposed exploration acreage in the Bremer Sub-basin. Please note that the article on the offshore acreage release is embargoed till the ministerial announcement of the 2005 release areas in April at the APPEA Conference in Perth.

Other items of interest include an investigation into the application of groundwater geochemistry to assist mineral exploration under cover, as well as the latest editions of our annual assessment of Australia's identified mineral resources and the Australian and international geomagnetic reference field models.

Another important recent release is the first of the revised 100 000 scale topographic data and maps which are being updated in collaboration with state emergency management and mapping agencies as part of a pilot project in several locations across Australia.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *AusGeo News*. The new format will allow greater flexibility in content and production, and also allows us to report more promptly on items of current interest. As always, we are keen to receive your feedback and would like to have your comments about the new format.

Comment



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