

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Estimates

28 May 2012

**Question:** BR12  
**Topic:** Acreage Release Timeframes  
**Proof Hansard Page:** 128

**Senator Siewert asked:**

**Senator SIEWERT:** I will go to the process of the advice you provide for the release of oil and gas acreage, which I know we have traversed before. I would like to go back to some of the detail, please. When will you be providing advice on the next round of acreage release?

**Dr Pigram:** Senator, the 2012 acreage release was released at the APPEA conference recently. So we start working on the 2013 one now. Basically, we are open for business in terms of suggestions from either industry or state government departments for the next round.

**Senator SIEWERT:** Can you take me through it? You are starting now. In what timeframe will you provide that advice to the department?

**Dr Pigram:** We will start to finalise that later this year. I will take it on notice for detailed timeframes. But the general timeframe is that we will have to prepare the packages and so forth for the information that would go out. So we would have, I think, a clear idea of what areas will go forward by the end of this calendar year. I will take it on notice and I will give you a detailed timeframe of each of the deadlines that we have.

**Senator SIEWERT:** That would be appreciated.

**Dr Pigram:** Because there is a series of them.

**Answer:**

The timeframe for the 2013 Offshore Petroleum Acreage Release is as follows:

- 31 July 2012 - Nominations by stakeholders for Offshore Petroleum Acreage Release areas close.
- Mid August 2012 - Initial assessment of the nominations by the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET) and Geoscience Australia completed. If the nominated areas are assessed as prospective, they are confirmed for release, subject to stakeholder consultation outlined below.
- 31 August 2012 (estimated) - Approval of the 2013 Offshore Petroleum Acreage Release areas by the Delegate.
- Between September and November 2012 - Agency consultation process occurs, led by RET. This process seeks to identify and resolve any issues with the 2013 acreage release areas regarding their proximity to the interests of other sectors (e.g., marine parks, fisheries, communications, defence, etc.) and state and Northern Territory, international and existing acreage boundaries.

- Between September and December 2012 - Regional (basin-scale) geological summaries covering the 2013 Acreage Release Areas are completed by Geoscience Australia. These summaries contain information on the main geological features, the potential petroleum systems, and an inventory and brief description of existing publicly available data.
- Early December 2012 - Gazetted 2013 Offshore Petroleum Acreage Release areas published in *Australian Petroleum News* on the RET website.
- 27 May 2013 - Formal 2013 Offshore Petroleum Acreage Release by the Minister for Resources, Energy and Tourism at the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association annual conference in Brisbane, Queensland. Data packages compiled by Geoscience Australia for the 2013 Offshore Acreage Release areas are made publicly available as soon as practicable after this date.