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Australian Geoscience Council Inc.

The Council of Earth Science Societies in Australia



7 Landsborough Street
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Standing Committee on Industry and Resources
Inquiry into resources exploration impediments
Parliament House
Canberra 2000

Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

**Follow-up by Australian Geoscience Council to yesterday's hearings at the inquiry
into resources exploration impediments**

At yesterday's hearings the AGC agreed to provide information on the costs of completing the regional geophysical coverage over the onshore part of the Australian continent.

We have now made estimates for this work, and these are provided below:

Airborne magnetic and radiometric coverage

We estimate that approximately 40 percent of the onshore part of the continent needs to be flown to complete the coverage at appropriate standards. This amounts to flying about 9.4 million km at ~\$8/km, realising a total cost, at current prices, of the order of \$75 million. If the ten-year program were shared with the States, the cost to the Commonwealth would be considerably reduced. This number is close to the \$80 million I estimated at the hearing yesterday.

Gravity coverage

We estimate that approximately 80 percent of the onshore part of the continent needs to be covered by gravity stations to obtain a 4 km grid of observations. This level of coverage is currently considered appropriate, in the context of assessing prospectivity and would amount to observing gravity at ~370 000 stations, at a total cost of about \$35 million.

Although both data sets are very important we would attach a higher priority to the airborne coverage because these data sets are used for land management planning and

soil mapping. We also argue that, compared to the wealth generated by the resource industries, these sums are not excessive and would represent an excellent investment.

Program Advisory Board

I would also like to add some additional information on the issue of a Program Advisory Board for Geoscience Australia, which was also raised in questioning yesterday.

We envisage a Program Advisory Board that would:

- Advise and support the CEO of GA in the furtherance of the Agency's mission, aims and objectives, particularly with the development of priorities and the core strategic programs, and
- Review the quality and relevance of GA's outputs.

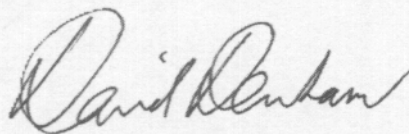
We recommend that the Board meets twice each year and comprises representatives from the following client/stakeholder groups:

Mineral Exploration Industry, Petroleum Exploration Industry, Exploration Service Industries (software/interpretation/data acquisition sectors), ***Consultants/Professional Geoscientists, Universities*** (for research and teaching interaction), ***Emergency Services*** (for the geohazard programs) and ***DEST*** (for links to the Science Portfolio and National Research Priorities).

The Board should also include clients of the National Mapping Division, but we are not in a position to make recommendations on who would be appropriate to represent this sector.

We believe that the above proposal, if implemented, would be beneficial to both GA and its clients and stakeholders, and through them the nation as a whole. We therefore commend this proposal for your consideration.

Yours sincerely



David Denham
President