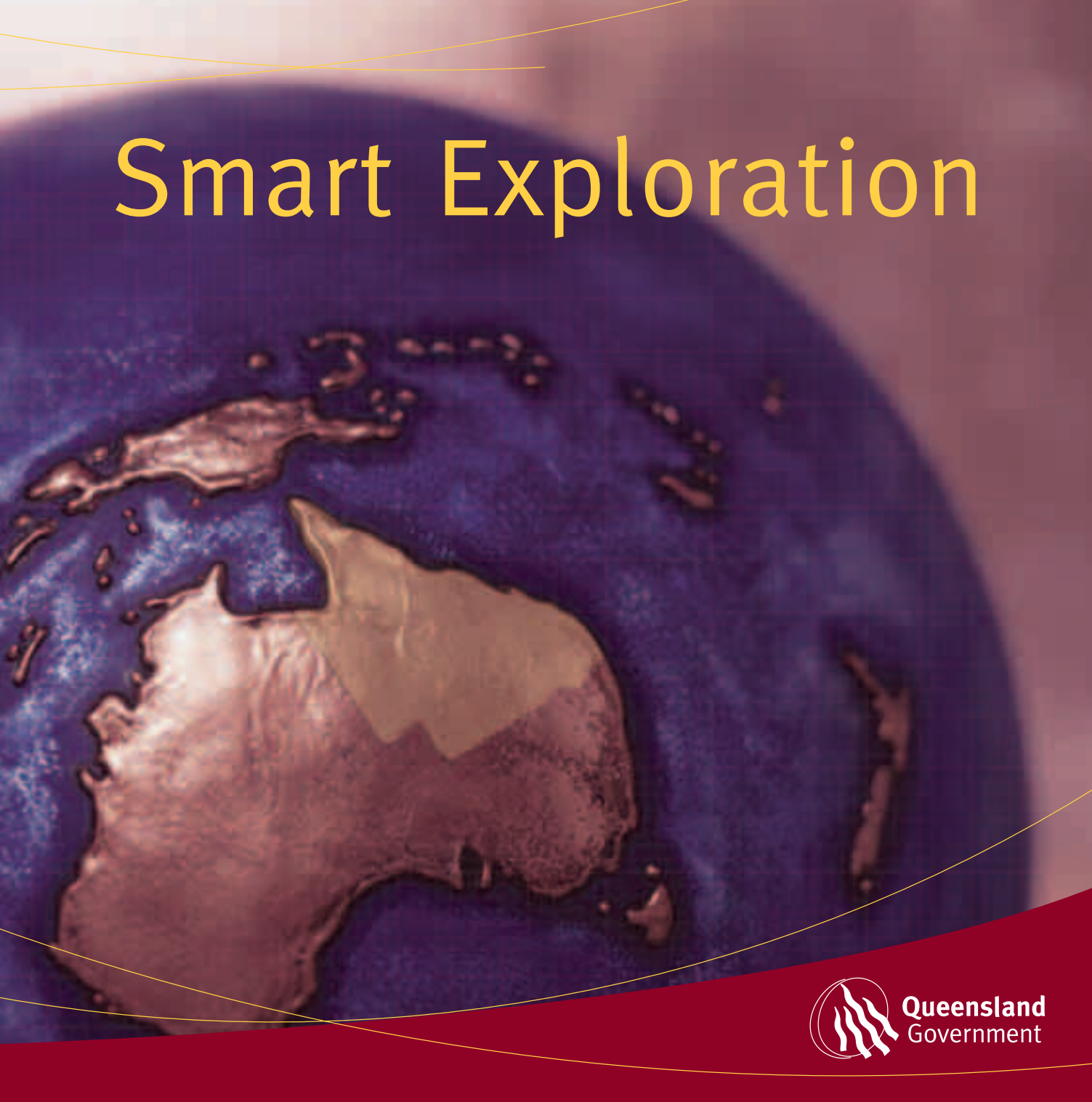


Smart Exploration



Queensland
Government

Smart Exploration

Smart Exploration is a \$20 million initiative of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (NR&M) to stimulate exploration investment in Queensland over the next four years. It builds on earlier funding initiatives that acquired gravity and airborne geophysical data to update the department's geological mapping capabilities. These earlier initiatives also developed systems to deliver strategic geoscience data via the Internet.

Smart Exploration targets key areas in the state that have significant mineral and energy potential including:

- Mount Isa region in north-western Queensland
- Bowen and Surat basins in central and southern Queensland
- Drummond Basin in central Queensland
- Mount Rawdon corridor in south-east Queensland.

Smart Exploration will:

- make Queensland more attractive for international investment in new mining exploration and development
- expand and update the geological and geophysical data coverage of these highly prospective regions to industry best practice
- improve the availability of archival data through its conversion into readily accessible digital formats.

Building on past achievements

Smart Exploration builds on previous funding initiatives in Queensland, which include:

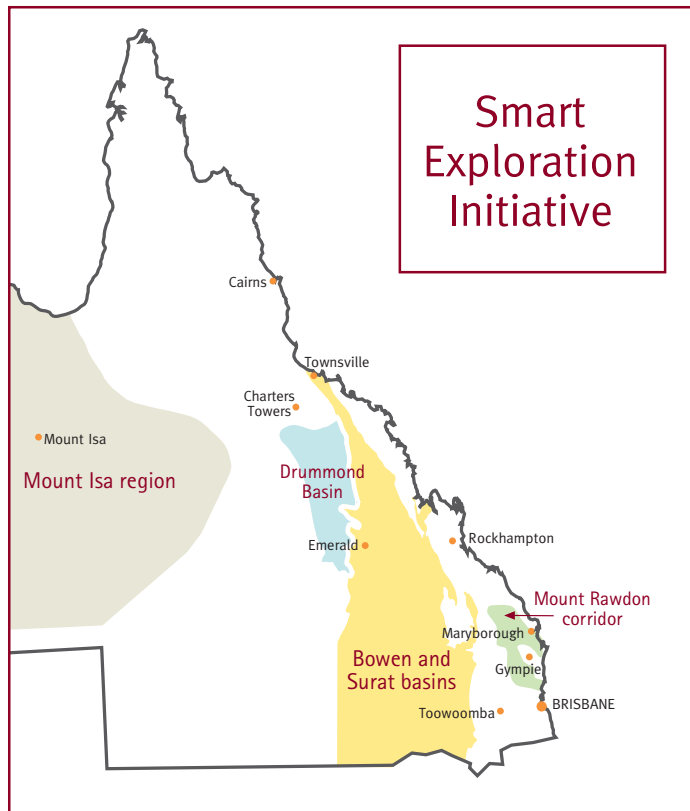
- the Exploration Attraction Initiative (\$4 million for geoscience from 2003–2006)
- the Prospectivity Plus Initiative (\$8 million from 1998–2001)
- other geophysical data-capture initiatives (\$8 million from 1994).

These initiatives have resulted in positive benefits for the exploration and mining industries such as:

- increasing exploration expenditure from North American companies following promotion of Queensland's prospectivity
- acquisition of 1.5 million line kilometres of airborne geophysical survey data
- acquisition of exploration geochemistry data for 1.6 million location points throughout prospective mineral regions of Queensland
- development and implementation of Queensland Digital Company Reports System (QDEX) for online lodgment, storage, management and access to historical company exploration reports
- development of the Interactive Resource and Tenure Maps (IRTM) system to facilitate strategic decision making and provide access to, and delivery of, mining tenement and geoscience information on the Internet
- development of the North-West Queensland Mineral Province Report over the Mount Isa area, which was a joint government-industry study that produced a comprehensive report and *Smart CD*
- approximately 80% of the exploration companies that purchased the North-West Queensland Mineral Province Report submitted applications for new exploration permits.



Smart Exploration Initiative



New target areas

Mount Isa region

Potential exists for the discovery of new mineral deposits in outcrop areas and frontier regions of this world-class copper, lead and zinc province. Work programs will focus on collecting new styles of geological data, updating geological mapping

and acquiring gravity and airborne geophysical data. This will be accompanied by enhanced data manipulation and modelling techniques to help identify new exploration targets and discover new mineral deposits.

Bowen and Surat basins

The Bowen Basin is the state's premier coal producing region and an emerging coal seam gas producer. Although most large coal resources have been identified there are still opportunities for economic deposits to be discovered. There is increasing Australian and overseas interest in the considerable thermal coal and coal seam gas resources in the Surat Energy Resources Province between Toowoomba and Injune in southern Queensland.

Surat Basin work programs will focus on acquiring gravity and airborne geophysical data and updating geological mapping. Specialist consultants and NR&M officers will conduct detailed geological interpretations and modelling in both basins to assist the discovery of additional coal and coal seam gas resources.

The production of coal seam gas from both energy provinces is expected to significantly increase due to the government's *13 per cent gas scheme*, and a shift by industry to this cleaner source of energy.

Drummond Basin

The Drummond Basin potentially contains significant gold deposits as indicated by the Vera Nancy and Pajingo gold mines, located south west of Charters Towers. New geological mapping will help develop a better understanding of mineralisation controls in this region.



Mount Rawdon corridor

South-east Queensland's Mount Rawdon corridor is the focus of additional airborne geophysical and geological mapping studies, which will enhance the understanding of mineralisation controls in this region. This corridor already contains the operating Mount Rawdon gold mine, which has current resources in excess of one million ounces of gold.

Conversion of archival geological, geochemical and geophysical data

Data conversion involves the transfer of key archival data into readily accessible formats. The priorities for data conversion are surface and drill hole geochemistry data and the transcription of seismic data. This easily available data will ensure that mineral and petroleum explorers have access to the broadest possible data resources for modelling and analysis in their exploration programs.

Data release

Smart Exploration geological and geophysical data will be released progressively following field checking and interpretation. Comprehensive integrated geological and geophysical data sets highlighting the mineral and energy potential of these areas will also be released.

The release of these new data sets will be promoted at national and international mining and petroleum conventions.



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