



Gold and Copper Resources Pty Limited (GCR) submits the following recommendations in relation to the Australian Governments Productivity Commission, Mineral and Energy Resource Exploration.

The below recommendations are made in the context of the below statements;

- **Time is of the essence!** Governments should be doing what they can to expedite exploration. Increasingly as civilization spreads the window for development of potential and as yet undiscovered resources closes.
- Clearly Australia needs to incentivise greenfields exploration,
- In the ‘tug-of-war’ between;

TECHNICALLY LESS CHALLENGING but POLITICALLY UNSTABLE exploration destinations

vs

TECHNICALLY CHALLENGING but POLITICALLY STABLE exploration destinations (like Australia)

Australia needs to decrease technical risk to attract exploration. The above can be done in a number of ways.

Recommendations by GCR include

- **Encouraging innovative greenfields exploration strategies.**
 - In GCR’s case (and I suspect in future cases) large tenement positions are required to run regional scale, low impact surveys which have the ability to search well below previously explored horizons. That said, exploration **licencing** needs to reflect these issues associated with the above, as currently it does not.
 - For example; Increase title periods commensurate with lead times for the necessary (?ambitious) exploration programs
 - ‘First come first served’ approach to issuing mineral licences is good/currently works and removes the latitude for corruption in any work bidding or cash bidding process.
 - In relation to any licence renewals the onus should be on the government to ensure prompt turn around for exploration license decisions. It would be good if there was a fixed period for such considerations as certainty in an otherwise uncertain industry is a plus.
 - Furthermore, any licence should be reawarded from the date any decision is made (as opposed to backdating a renewal to any anniversary date.) Backdating results in often significant periods of ambiguity, (often greater than 6 months from initial renewal application to signed title deed) arising and inevitably impacts on investment. Governments can’t have it both ways, i.e. request regular quarterly reports on exploration projects then take onerous periods to reflect on these reports.

- For large scale low impact exploration surveys (in particularly ground based geophysical techniques)
 - Issue bonafide explorers with a social license to operate. The above would reduce the administrative hurdles (time and cost) of dealing with large numbers of landowners (i.e. consider allowing explorers the right to collect data relating to resources (that belong to the people of the country) similarly to how Telstra, gas, water and power employees are allowed to collect data on individual properties. For low disturbance exploration, where there is no more disturbance than simply walking across properties, it is illogical to have to go through the costly process of negotiating a full land access agreement. Particularly when the explorer is simply determining if there is potential for mineralisation in that area, and does not necessarily lead to further drilling.
 - Reduce the time taken to have any resulting arbitration or Land & Environment Court matters addressed
 - In cases, like gradient array induced polarization surveys, where infrastructure may need to be placed on adjacent licence holders ground (eg Company B) in to collect data on ground held by Company A, governments should ensure the above can happen (ie remove the possibility that Company B could stall Company A's progress)
 - As a minimum the Australian Government should ensure various peak bodies come up with mutually agreed to land access agreements (this comment is made in relation to the break down in communications between the NSW Farmers Federation and the NSW Mineral Council which again costs explorers time and therefore money)
- Ensure when a **water bore** is approved for drilling the relevant EL owner is notified so they can (at their expense) log/sample the geology etc.
- Ensure when **earthworks** are being carried out (and new /fresh geology is being exposed) the relevant EL owner is notified and a suitably qualified geologist can (at their expense) log/sample the geology etc.
- In the area of **planning**, governments need to put 'boundaries' around geologically/minerally endowed and historically prospected ground in order to give some priority to those areas.
- Ensure where 'significant' developments are being planned that a suitable 'sterilisation' program including drilling is carried out as part of any assessment and the results are looked at by an independent body (include gas pipelines, wind farms and environmental offset areas related to other planned developments)
- In the area of **education**, governments should address issues of misinformation (generally in the media). For example issues being argued/resolved in NSW, Coal seam gas (CSG) issues are being 'allowed' to affect areas where the same issues are not present (i.e. the geological environment is different)
- In areas of **competing land uses** governments should prioritise exploration strategies that offer a holistic assessment of an area (ie large scale low impact geophysical surveys vs drilling)
- In the area of providing **precompetitive data** governments should compliment previously completed geological and geophysical surveys (principally magnetics, radiometrics and broad scale gravity) with higher resolution datasets including airborne EM and FALCON gravity.

Any questions related to the above should be directed to me,

Tully Richards