

New Licences Almost Cover Otway Basin

South Australia's Otway Basin is now almost fully covered by petroleum licences after the state government granted PEL 154 and 155 to Sydney based explorer Rawson Resources in mid-July.

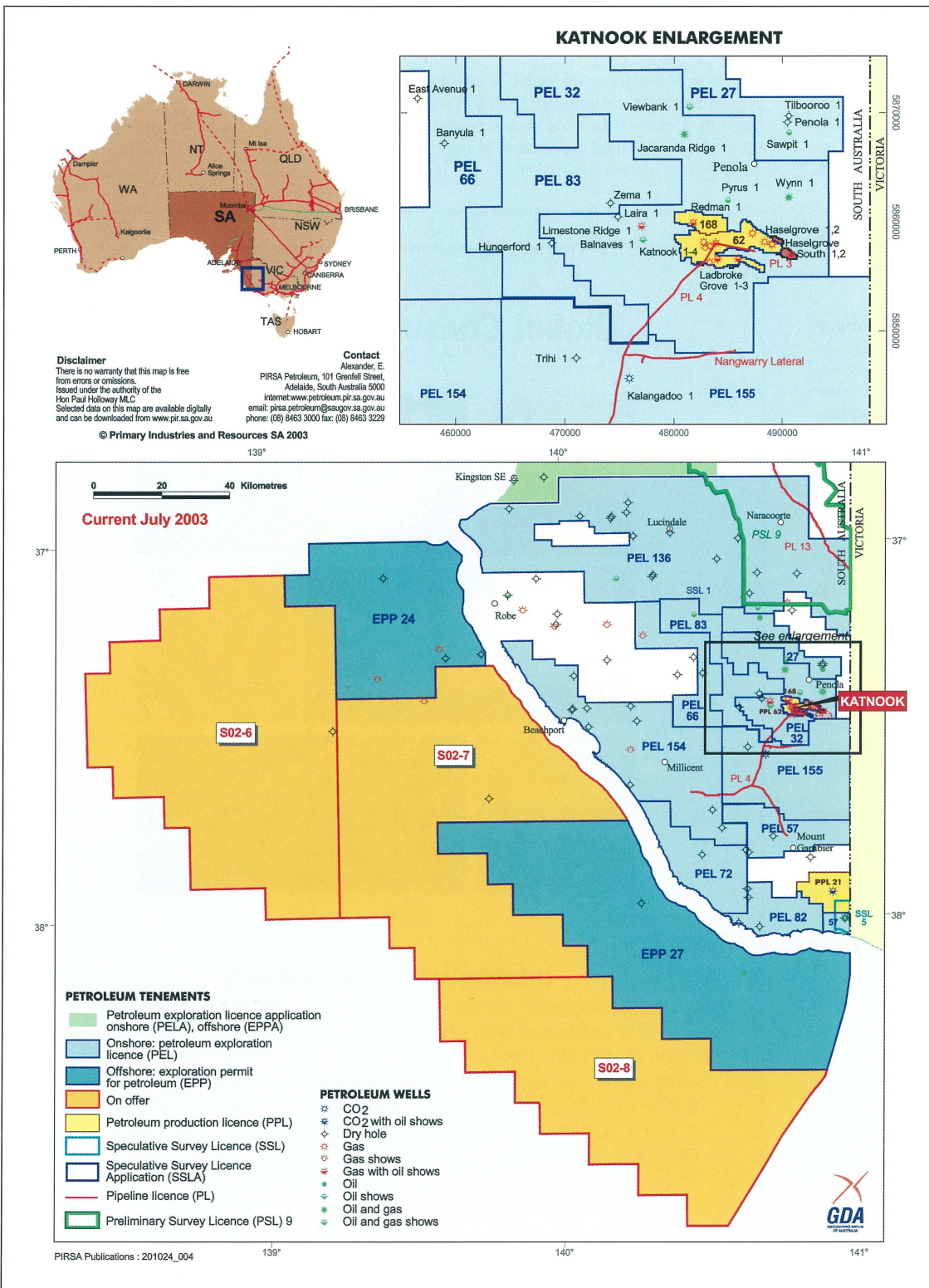
The two five-year work program bids by Rawson for OT2002A and B (now PELs 154 and 155) represents a \$5.1 MM exploration investment, and includes two wildcat wells, 200 line kilometres of seismic surveying, soil gas field surveys and geoscientific studies.

Rawson Resources, which has guaranteed the first two years of work programs for each block, intends to use geochemical surveys to high-grade trends before laying out its seismic programs.

According to the South Australian Minister for Mineral Resources Development, Paul Holloway, the total value of Otway Basin petroleum production in 2002 was \$20.8 MM. Caroline-1, located southeast of Mount Gambier, still ranks as the most valuable well in SA, with its production since 1968 worth \$217 MM.

While onshore Otway Basin puts about \$2 MM into the State's coffers each year, Holloway said the offshore sector is starting to attract the attention of major and junior explorers alike. "An exploration well is scheduled to be drilled by February 2005 by Woodside and Great Artesian Oil & Gas in EPP 27", the Minister said. "In addition, three large areas in the offshore Otway Basin (designated S02-6, 7 and 8) are open for work program bidding until September 25th this year."

The Minister said there has already been considerable interest expressed in these blocks because of their potential for large oil and gas accumulations. "The 'Humpback Lead', located in 1,300 m of water in bid block S02-6 offshore from Robe, has attributes similar to those of proven petroleum play trends where giant oil and gas fields have been discovered", he said. ■



Otway Basin petroleum tenement map.