

# State Government Releases Central WA Acreage

An exciting chapter in petroleum exploration in Western Australia is about to unfold, with an unprecedented A\$841million to be spent on new exploration work programs in the State's far north.

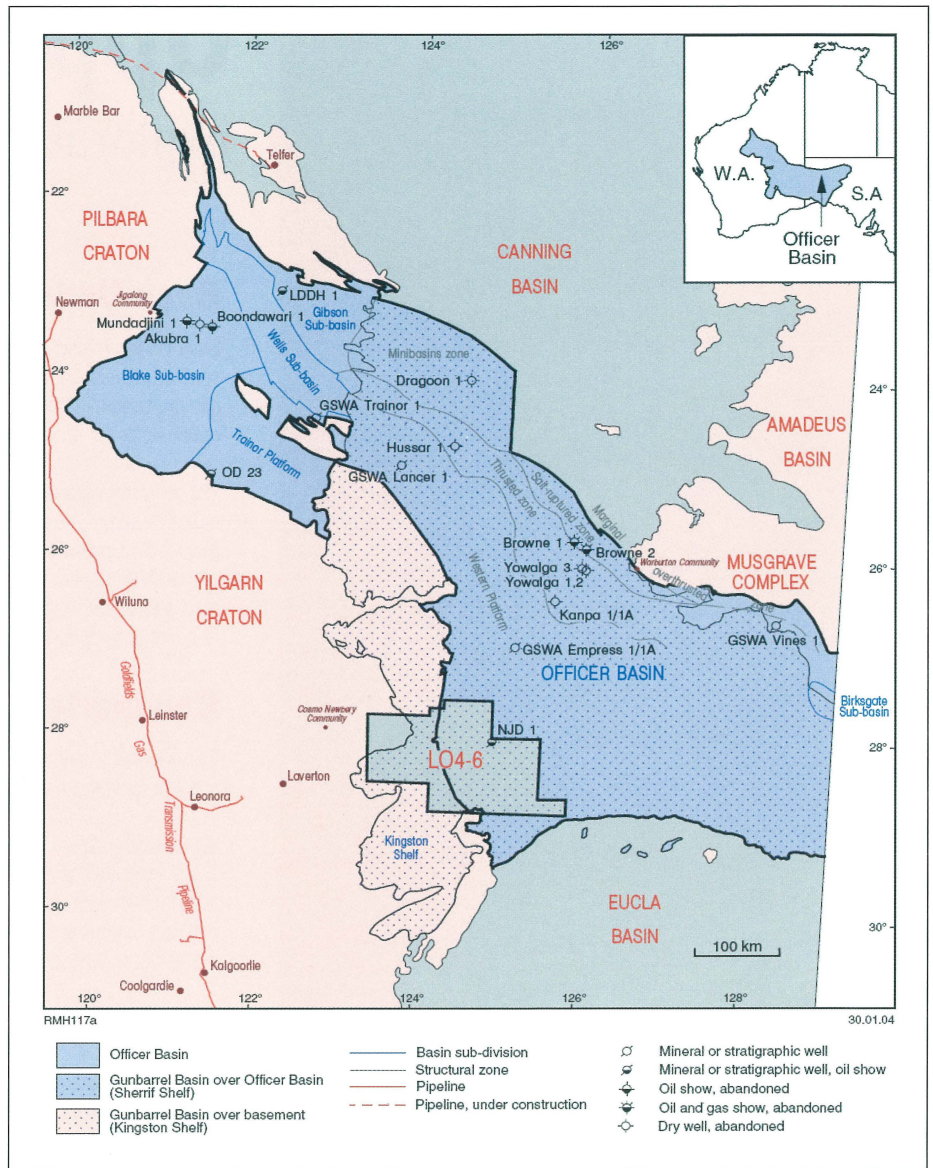
Resources Minister Francis Logan said this included the biggest single work commitment in WA's petroleum exploration history. "American energy giant, the Hess Corporation, has undertaken to spend A\$504 million on exploration over the next three years, including 16 new wells on the Exmouth Plateau, about 130 km west of Barrow Island. We believe the Hess work program is a record bid for an Australian oil and gas permit, eclipsing Shell's A\$127 million bid to win a permit on the Browse Basin last year."

The State government has also released 13 new areas for oil and gas exploration in the Canning, Carnarvon, Officer and Perth basins. Logan announced the acreage releases, stating bidding for the areas has the potential to greatly benefit Western Australia's economy.

"Petroleum exploration in WA is reaching new heights and now accounts for 56% of Australia's total petroleum exploration. From 2005 to 2006, petroleum exploration increased by 65% in WA - from A\$572 million to A\$942 million", Logan noted.

The Canning Basin release areas range in size from 321 to 9,971 km<sup>2</sup>, with four in the south and four in the north. The Minister said there had been increased interest in the Canning Basin in recent years, with bids for acreage involving Australian and Canadian companies. "Up to 10 wells may be drilled this year in the Canning Basin, a significant increase on previous years", he said.

Three blocks in the Officer Basin have also been released, including L07-10, L07-11 and L07-12. In the Carnarvon Basin, EP T06-1/L06-10, located in the Barrow Sub-basin, has been re-released. Exploration



The Officer Basin release.

drilling in the Officer Basin in South Australia has led to several oil and gas shows and the discovery of the Dingo Gasfield in the Northern Territory.

"The Carpenter government is making decisions for the future and will continue to promote the petroleum potential of WA's vast sedimentary basins." ■