



Acreage release and designated prime areas

The purpose of this guideline is to provide guidance on the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety's (DMIRS) yearly Acreage Release Program and designation of prime areas within Western Australia.

What is an acreage release?

To responsibly manage Western Australia's petroleum and geothermal energy resources, DMIRS periodically releases discrete areas for which applications can be made for exploration permits (section 30 of the *Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967* (PGERA)). This involves a competitive work-program bid process.

Discrete areas are selected based on a combination of nominations from proponents and an assessment of the prospectivity and/or proximity to relevant infrastructure (prime areas).

Acreage releases are generally made annually and are formalised by way of publication in the *Western Australian Government Gazette*.

Details of acreage releases can be found at [Prospectivity and Acreage releases](#).

What is a prime area?

Any area of the State not subject to a live title that may have a high likelihood of resource prospectivity and/or essential infrastructure available, may be set aside for future release via an acreage release.

Pursuant to Section 28 of the PGERA, designated prime areas are declared as reserved via a *Government Gazette* notice, and shall not be the subject of a petroleum or geothermal exploration permit, drilling reservation, retention lease, production licence, special prospecting authority or access authority, until the declaration is varied to accommodate an acreage release.

The public can view designated prime areas via [Tengraph Web](#).

Can I lodge a petroleum or geothermal application over a prime area?

DMIRS will only accept an application within a prime area if it has been made available pursuant to a specific discrete acreage release.

DMIRS will not accept any applications lodged outside of the relevant application bidding period.

Importantly, DMIRS will accept applications for a Special Prospecting Authority at any time, for any area of the State not subject to a live title or set aside as a prime area for acreage release.

Will new locations be designated as prime areas in the future?

DMIRS reviews and sets aside prime areas for future acreage releases on an annual basis. All nominations of expression of interest received are considered during this review.

If an area of interest within a prime area is not released, a nomination of expression of interest should be lodged for DMIRS to consider in a future release.

If you have any further queries regarding any of the information contained within this guideline, please email the Resource Tenure team at petroleum.titles@dmirs.wa.gov.au