

MIL-OSI Australia: First data released from National Drilling Initiative's South Nicholson campaign

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The first data from one of the most promising exploration frontiers in Australia is now available from Geoscience Australia.

Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia Keith Pitt has announced the release of initial data from the National Drilling Initiative's Carrara 1 deep stratigraphic drill hole from the Carrara Sub-basin at the Annual Geoscience Exploration Seminar (AGES) in Alice Springs.

The Carrara Sub-basin was discovered as a result of a seismic survey of the South Nicholson Basin in the Barkly Tableland region of the Northern Territory in 2017.

It was one of the most significant discoveries made during the first phase of the \$225 million [Exploring for the Future program](#).

The downhole logging data will be available from the new Borehole Completion Report tool on the Exploring for the Future and MinEx CRC web portals.

This will include downhole wireline logs, on-site drilling logs and photographs of core samples taken from the 1751-metre-deep hole.

It will eventually include a diverse collection of datasets, including detailed geochemical, rock properties and fluid inclusion data, x-ray powder diffraction analysis and geochronology on over 350 samples of the recovered core.

Geoscience Australia's Minerals, Energy and Groundwater Division Chief Dr Andrew Heap said the release of this data, just four months after the completion of drilling, would encourage industry to explore this frontier region.

"Preliminary findings from this drill hole indicate that the Carrara Sub-basin hosts rocks that may be equivalent to those that host the Mount Isa deposit, which is one of the largest lead, zinc and silver deposits in the world," Dr Heap said.

"The drill hole also indicates the sediments are prospective for energy resources and show geological affinities with the Beetaloo Sub-basin, one of the most promising shale gas resources globally.

"Geoscience Australia and our project partners will analyse and interpret this drill hole data over the next 12 months and publish our own expert analysis, but we wanted to get this information in the hands of industry as soon as possible so explorers could use it as the basis for their own campaigns.

"While it's early days, we are incredibly excited about what this data is telling us about the potential of the Carrara Sub-basin as Australia's next Beetaloo or Mount Isa."

Photograph courtesy of MinEx CRC

The Borehole Completion Report tool also allows users to visualise multiple datasets without specialist software and will be updated as soon as new information is available.

MinEx CRC Chief Executive Officer Andrew Bailey said the tool would allow industry to access this data faster than ever.

"This is a first-of-its-kind approach to delivering pre-competitive data," Mr Bailey said.

The drill core will also be made publicly available for viewing and analysis by the middle of the year.

Northern Territory Geological Survey executive director Ian Scrimgeour said this analysis could shed new light on the resource potential of the region.

"Initial data from the National Drilling Initiative has already generated huge interest in the exploration community, and this new release is equally exciting in what it reveals about the resource potential of the region," Dr Scrimgeour said.

The National Drilling Initiative is one of three research programs run by MinEx CRC.

It aims to overcome the technical challenges of exploring for mineral deposits in prospective rocks concealed under the cover of younger rocks and sediment through new exploration tools and techniques.

The Carrara 1 release comes hot off the heels of the [National Drilling Initiative's](#) successful East Tennant campaign that found that region had the right geology to host a range of minerals, including copper and gold.

Check out the data via the [Exploring for the Future Data Discovery Portal](#) or the [MinEx CRC National Drilling Initiative Portal](#).

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