

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Estimates

3 June 2013

Question: **BR7**
Topic: **Exploration in the Sorrell Basin**
Proof Hansard Page: **121**

Senator Bushby asked:

Senator BUSHBY: Has there been any exploration in the Sorell Basin as a result of the acreage releases in past years?

Dr Pigram: Can I take that on notice and we will let you know what the activity is in that area?

Senator BUSHBY: Okay.

Dr Pigram: Our future work program is going to examine that area south of Tasmania. We call it the South Tasman Rise. It is in pretty difficult waters and it is quite deep, but, as part of understanding the full potential of the marine jurisdiction, that is one of the areas that we know probably least about, so we will examine that sometime in the next few years.

Senator BUSHBY: Thank you.

Answer:

Following Acreage Releases in 2001, 2003 and 2006, Santos and their various joint venture partners held considerable acreage in the Sorell Basin, operating the permits T/32P, T/33P, T/36P and T/48P. Santos acquired 2D seismic data and reprocessed existing seismic data in these permits, and acquired one 3D seismic survey in the Strahan Sub-basin (T/36P). In 2008, Santos drilled the Jarver-1 well in permit T/33P, however the well was dry. By mid-2010, all of the Santos permits had been relinquished with the exception of T/32P, where the Santos share was taken over by Perenco (SE Australia) Pty Ltd in 2010. In 2011, Perenco acquired the 1,000 km² Wolseley 3D seismic survey in T/32P, the only permit currently operating in the Sorell Basin.

In 2004, an area (T04-5) was released in the southern Sorell Basin (Port Davey Sub-basin); however, no bids were received.

In 2012, the Government released the large Release Area T12-2 in the northern Sorell Basin, following a Geoscience Australia study of the prospectivity of the basin. T12-2 lies to the southeast of T/32P and includes areas previously covered by the T/33P, T/48P and T/36P permits. Bids for this area closed 9 May 2013.