

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2008-09  
23 October 2008

**Question:** SR-24  
**Topic:** Mineral exploration  
**Proof Hansard Page:** E136

**Senator Eggleston asked:**

**Senator EGGLESTON**—Would you have a need or could you use satellite technology more widely?

**Dr James Johnson**—From the perspective of mineral exploration, it is almost a case of you can never have too much data. But, as with many things, you do the best job you can with the data available. My colleague Dr Schneider is more familiar with the various, different satellite methods, perhaps less so the application to mineral exploration. He might be able to speak more to the issue of satellite data coverage of Australia if that is what you are interested in.

**Senator EGGLESTON**—I am interested in whether you feel you could usefully use more satellite based technology to enhance your work and whether or not the fact that you do not do that is a budget issue to some degree? Or are you constrained from using satellite technology?

**Dr James Johnson**—I will take that one on notice, thank you, Senator.

**Answer:**

Geoscience Australia captures and uses large amounts of data from Earth observing satellites on a daily basis, and has been doing so for 30 years. We hold a unique national archive which is used for many purposes including mapping of minerals, environmental applications, and emergency response. The science and technology are advancing, and data from satellites can be expected to play a continuing, probably increasing, role in understanding surface and groundwater, mapping of minerals, and monitoring of vegetation, ecosystems, wetlands etc. However, on a day-to-day basis we do not find ourselves limited by lack of access to data from satellites. If new work within the portfolio required additional satellite data we would factor that into the relevant funding proposal.

