



Department of Mines,
Petroleum and Exploration



Policy

Airborne geophysical survey reporting (geophysical survey register and data repository)

Document hierarchy

Legislation	<i>Mining Act 1978</i> <i>Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967</i>
Policy	Airborne geophysical survey reporting

Version history

Version	Date	Changes
4.1	2017	Notice provided that to lodge an airborne survey dataset under Mining Act provisions, the survey data must be included in or submitted as a statutory tenement exploration report.
4.2	2023	Clarification regarding survey data acquired under conditions of the <i>Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967</i> . Clarification of difference between airborne and ground surveys held in the MAGIX register and repository.
4.3	2026	Notice provided that repository-only surveys may be released if ownership changes and the department is not notified or if the owner ceases to trade without transferring ownership.

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Summary of the policy provisions

This policy provides an optional alternative to reporting airborne geophysical surveys over mining tenements issued under the *Mining Act 1978* (Act) and describes how such data will be registered.

Policy provisions include:

- once only data submission (regardless of tenements covered);
- transferable registration number;
- five-year total confidentiality period (regardless of tenement situation); and/or
- optional conversion of survey status to multi-client.

MAGIX database and register of geophysical surveys

The department's MAGIX database contains records of geophysical survey datasets that are held in a data repository established and maintained by the department. The information recorded includes survey location, basic specifications, data provenance and access information.

The public survey register is a subset of the MAGIX database in which confidential information has been suppressed. It can be viewed and queried via the department's data delivery platforms, from which non-confidential survey datasets can be downloaded free of charge.

All airborne geophysical data submitted to the department is included in the MAGIX register and data repository.

Reporting policy registration process

To submit an online registration form to the MAGIX data repository, log into your DMPE account and submit an online registration form including the complete digital data set and operations report.

The department will provide a MAGIX survey registration number and confirmation of the data confidentiality status and initial confidentiality period.

The survey location, specifications and data access information will be made public on the MAGIX register, immediately after data verification.

Data access tiers

There are three data access tiers with different access restrictions.

1. Public: Free open-access datasets available to download immediately.
2. Multi-client: Commercial datasets managed and sold through authorised third-party sales agents.
3. Confidential: Private datasets restricted entirely to the original survey owner.

Confidentiality

Once the submission process is complete, the data will be held in a confidential archive until the expiry of the confidentiality period unless early release is authorised by the owner of the data.

No further data submission will be required to comply with the Act reporting requirements in respect to this survey. A registration number reference is provided once the submission process is complete. For future reports, this registration number can be used in lieu of resupplying the data.

At any time up to the expiry of the initial confidentiality period, the owner of the data may exercise the multi-client option by submitting a copy of a sales agreement with an independent sales agent. The data status in the MAGIX register will be changed from confidential to multi-client and the confidentiality period will be extended for five years from the date of expiry of the initial confidentiality period.

If the department receives no notification of the change of status to multi-client by the expiry of the initial confidentiality period, the data will become eligible for release to open file on that date. The data status in the MAGIX register will be changed from confidential to open file.

Airborne geophysical survey registration provisions

Mineral exploration airborne surveys submitted to the database and repository are held under one of the following:

- reporting policy provisions;
- Mining Act provisions;
- repository-only provisions; or
- other provisions.

Reporting policy provisions

This is the department's preferred reporting method for mineral exploration airborne surveys.

Under the terms of this policy, companies or individuals who are obliged under the Act to submit airborne survey data as part of a statutory exploration report have the option to register the survey(s) under reporting policy conditions as described below, rather than including the data in the report.

For example, the data from a reporting policy registered survey submitted outside a formal statutory exploration report will be held confidential until their public release is authorised. However, the survey location, specifications, data access information and, perhaps, small-scale images of the data will be made public immediately on the MAGIX register, with exceptions as noted below.

Once only survey registration and data submission

Data from a reporting policy registered survey only needs to be submitted once.

No further data reporting on the survey will be required whether in annual, partial relinquishment or final surrender reports. Reference to the survey registration number will be sufficient for all data reporting purposes. Even when a tenement is taken out after the survey (as might be the case in open range surveys) tenement reporting of the airborne survey data only needs to make reference to the survey registration number.

Transferable registration number

As the MAGIX survey registration number is linked to the survey and not to the reporting party or the underlying tenement(s), the registration number is transferable. Therefore, if the reporting party changes (as might be the case in a change of tenement ownership, joint venture agreement or sale of data), the new reporting party can refer to the survey dataset by quoting the registration number.

Five-year total confidentiality period

The data from a reporting policy registered survey will be held confidentially for a period of five years from completion of survey flying even in relinquished or surrendered areas and regardless of the status of any tenement report in which the survey is referenced.

Confidentiality does not extend to survey metadata, which includes the survey location, basic specifications and thumbnail images of the data. These will be included in a publicly available survey index. Departmental officers will have access to the data during the confidentiality period for purposes of Geological Survey of Western Australia (GSWA) mapping programs.

On the expiry of this period all the data will become eligible for release unless the confidentiality period is extended.

Multi-client conversion option

At any time during the nominated initial confidentiality period, the owner of a survey registered under reporting policy conditions may have the data confidentiality period extended for up to five years beyond the initial confidentiality expiry date by declaring the survey to be multi-client.

To exercise this option, the owner must place the data set with an independent data sales agent for unrestricted commercial sale to the public. The sale price must not be greater than the normal market prices prevailing for commercial multi-client data.

While the data is available for commercial sale, it will not be placed on open file during the extended confidentiality period¹. If the data is withdrawn from commercial sale or is not available upon request, the data will become immediately eligible for release to open file.

It is the responsibility of the owner of the survey data to advise the department when the data becomes multi-client. The department requires written notification of the change of status together with a copy of the sales agreement with the sales agent. If these are not received by the agreed release date, the data will be released to open file and the data status in the MAGIX register will be changed from confidential to open file.

There is nothing to prevent the owner of the survey from making private data sales or exchanges outside the ambit of the multi-client sales process, or during the confidentiality period.

Mining Act provisions

Airborne survey data included in a statutory Mining Act report will be registered in the MAGIX database under the Act provisions.

Under the Act, information in a report that has been submitted to the department may be released after a maximum period of five years. If the data has been included in an annual report, the tenement holder is still obliged to submit digital survey data in relinquishment and surrender reports for public release after three months as specified in the Act.

Data from surveys registered under Act provisions will be released to open file under the normal process of release of statutory reports.

Note that these provisions might be affected by any subsequent changes that may be made to the Act, regulations or reporting guidelines.

Repository-only provisions

Data from any geophysical surveys that are not subject to statutory reporting legislation may be registered for confidential storage in the data repository under confidentiality conditions specified by the owner of the data.

Such repository-only surveys are outside the formal reporting system and will be released to open file only with the consent of the data owner.

Owners of data registered under repository-only conditions are free to commercialise or otherwise deal with their data as they wish.

¹ Surveys submitted under reporting policy conditions before 1 September 2008 were granted an indefinite multi-client confidentiality period. These surveys are recognisable by a registration number in the 60000 series.

Companies are encouraged to submit data from past surveys that have not previously been reported, any such non-obligatory submissions will be registered under these repository-only conditions.

It is important to note that the department may release the data if the ownership changes and the department is not notified, or the specified owner ceases to trade without transferring ownership.

Other provisions

Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967 (PGERA)

Airborne survey submissions that are subject to the provisions of PGERA may not be registered under reporting policy conditions.

General

In all cases, unless specified to the contrary, departmental officers will have access to the data as required for the purpose of GSWA mapping programs, however the data will not be released or published while they remain confidential.

Although the survey data will remain confidential during the nominated period determined by the reporting provisions, the survey outline and basic specifications will be displayed in the public survey register, unless prohibited under the conditions of the submission.

Survey data confidentiality status in the public register

Confidentiality period

In the public register, a survey dataset will have a confidentiality status of confidential, open file or multi-client.

The provisions under which a survey has been registered will determine the maximum confidentiality period before the data becomes eligible for public release (see table 1).

Table 1: Variation of confidentiality period with reporting conditions.

Reporting conditions	Confidentiality period
Reporting policy	Five years after survey completion (with optional five-year multi-client extension)
The Act	Maximum five years from submission*
Repository-only	Indefinite (owner-determined)

*Data submissions are required in tenement relinquishment or surrender reports for release after three months. Tenement reports and data may be released after all tenements have been surrendered or cancelled as described in the Act.

Data custodianship

For data that is still confidential, the primary custodian will be the owner of the data. This is normally the company that commissioned the survey.

For reporting policy registered surveys that have been declared multi-client, the primary custodian will be the appointed agent who is handling sales of the data.

GSWA will always be a custodian of all airborne surveys that are submitted to the department under any condition. However, GSWA will only be the primary custodian of data that has been placed to open file (not confidential).

The survey status determines who the primary custodian of the data is. This is summarised in table 2 below.

Table 2: Primary custodian as determined by survey status.

	Confidential survey	Multi-client survey	Open file survey
Primary custodian	Data owner	Sales agent	GSWA

Ground geophysical surveys in the MAGIX register

The reporting policy does not apply to data from ground geophysical surveys that are required to be submitted to the department under the terms of the Act.

Ground survey datasets may be accepted for registration in the MAGIX repository under the following conditions:

- Only complete survey datasets in industry-standard formats and including an operations report (where possible as delivered by the contractor) will be accepted.
- The dataset will remain confidential for a period of five years from the end date of the survey, or when any report in which it is referenced by the registration number is released (whichever is earliest).
- For relinquishment reporting, data within the relinquished area must still be submitted with the report unless the data owner is prepared to quote the registration number in the relinquishment report and release the entire dataset.

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