



Good Standing Agreement: Regional Studies

Frequently asked questions

Purpose

To clarify what the Joint Authority considers being a 'regional study' for the purposes of satisfying a Good Standing Agreement (GSA). Note all information below is provided as a guide only.

Overview

The Joint Authority acknowledges the value in enhancing the linkages and collaboration between the offshore petroleum industry and science and research institutions. Regional studies will leverage new information and new knowledge about Australia's offshore basins.

The revised *Offshore Petroleum Exploration Guideline: Work-bid* (the guideline) commenced on 1 June 2015 and made provision for a case-by case consideration of 'regional studies' as a mechanism to discharge a GSA. The guideline states that the data generated from a regional study will become 'open file' in an agreed timeframe with the Joint Authority and the regional study is to be of interest to the broader petroleum industry. Studies are to be completed within three-years from the date of the GSA.

How do I request the regional study option to satisfy a GSA

When completing the 'Request for Good Standing Agreement' application form on the National Offshore Petroleum Titles Administrator's (NOPTA) website (<http://www.nopta.gov.au/forms/nopta-forms/gsa-application-form.pdf>), titleholders should indicate which GSA option they prefer (only one option can be chosen at the time of application) for consideration by the Joint Authority.

Holders of an existing GSA can make a request to the Joint Authority to change the terms and conditions of the GSA. This is to be done in writing through NOPTA. The Joint Authority's agreement to change the terms and conditions of the GSA will be done on a case-by-case basis. If the request is for the inclusion of regional studies, the request should present a draft proposal of the parameters of the study. If the Joint Authority agrees to change the terms and conditions of an existing GSA, the GSA holder should make a revised public announcement.

What constitutes a regional study?

Subject to agreement with the Joint Authority, a regional study can take a number of forms. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Collaboration on studies or projects that are of broader interest to the Australian petroleum industry and the Australian community. This could involve collaboration with research institutions including Geoscience Australia, academia, or other geoscience/science agencies or between GSA holders. A regional study can be geological, geochemical, geophysical and/or data-based in nature.
- Acquisition, processing and/or interpretation of new exclusive 2D or 3D seismic data, or geophysical or geological survey data acquired under a Special Prospecting Authority after the signing of the GSA. Regional surveys acquired in areas that are lightly-explored and are of broader interest to the Australian petroleum industry will be preferred. Data predominantly acquired over titles currently held by the GSA holder will not be eligible.

- Reprocessing of existing publically available data, applying new technologies, which are of broader interest and benefit to the Australian petroleum industry. Data predominantly reprocessed over titles currently held by the GSA holder will not be eligible.

What information do I need to submit with my GSA application?

For the Joint Authority to assess whether a proposed regional study is appropriate, the applicant must provide as much detail as possible in relation to the following:

- details of the regional study
- type of data to be collected and reviewed
- anticipated timeframes for study components, such as for a new survey acquisition, processed and interpretation timing
- output to be generated and anticipated submission timing.

In relation to timeframes, the expectation is that submission of data within the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Resource Management and Administration) Regulations 2011 (RMA regulations) would be met as a minimum. Specifically, this would mean 18-months after completion of the acquisition for all acquisition data; 24-months for submission of all processed data; and 30-months for all interpretative data. The data items to be submitted, formats and media types under each data type are outlined in the RMA regulations and schedules to those regulations. However, it should be noted that if both parties agree, the GSA may require data to be submitted earlier.

If assistance is required in the development of an idea for a regional study it would be useful to have preliminary communication with the Offshore Resources Branch in the Department of Innovation, Industry and Science and Geoscience Australia.

What does 'open file' in an agreed timeframe mean?

The purpose of a regional study is to add to the understanding of Australia's geological knowledge and make it widely available in the earliest possible timeframe.

If a regional study is agreed under a GSA, the Joint Authority will seek to have the data/results of the study made publicly available or 'open file' as soon as practicable. This will usually mean the data/results of that study will be made publicly available on submission, for the benefit of the broader petroleum industry and the Australian community.

The GSA terms and conditions agreed by both parties will detail the requirement for the release of data i.e. agreement to make the information 'open-file' earlier than the timeframes outlined in the RMA regulations. Regional studies which are not able to be concluded in the required timeframe will not be agreed to by the Joint Authority.

The extended period of confidentiality provided for data acquired under a Multi-Client or non-exclusive arrangement (i.e. 15 years) runs counter to the intent of regional studies to make information publicly available as soon as practicable. For this reason Multi-Client Surveys will not be accepted for the purposes of a GSA, unless earlier release of data can be agreed.