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## Government supports exploration amid COVID-19 challenges

APPEA today welcomed the announcement from Resources Minister Keith Pitt on measures to provide flexibility to offshore oil and gas explorers as they confront challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The measures announced today provide for a simplified application process to suspend and extend existing work programs, as well as further flexibility to be applied to well expectations in the renewal of exploration permits.

These measures will provide companies with additional flexibility in their exploration titles. This will allow them to respond quickly when the health crisis abates, and the economy recovers.

APPEA Chief Executive Andrew McConville said the measures would particularly help smaller exploration companies that continue to play a critical role in the identification and development of new energy resources.

“Current economic conditions have the potential to irreparably damage oil and gas exploration in Australia unless steps are taken to provide short term relief to allow companies to remain in business until the economy has moved through the worst of the downturn,” Mr McConville said.

“Successful exploration can deliver revenue for governments, jobs for workers and long-term energy security for Australia.”

Mr McConville said the Australian oil and gas industry is responding to the personnel and operational challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to protect the health and safety of our workforce and host communities, while ensuring vital energy supplies are maintained.

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