



Northern Territory of Australia

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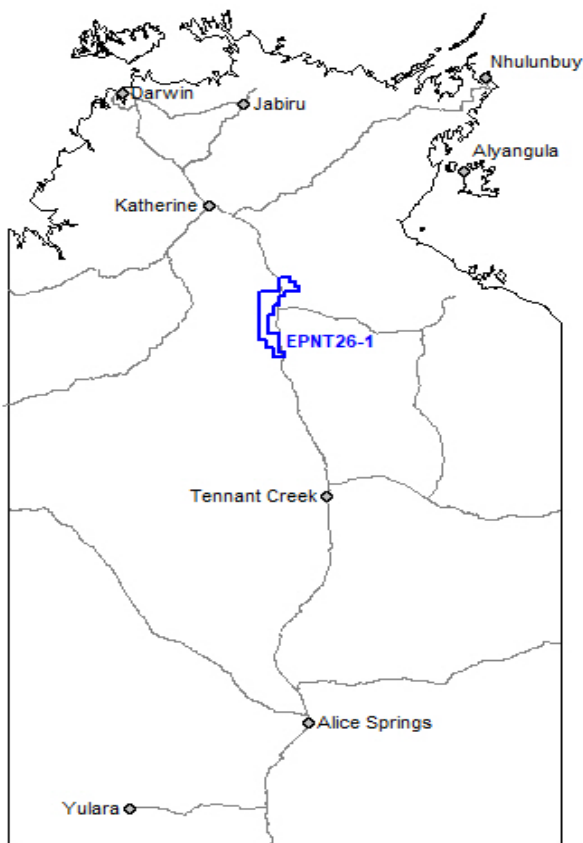
18 February 2026

Northern Territory of Australia

Petroleum Act 1984

Notice of Invitation for a Petroleum Exploration Permit Application (Acreage Release)

Under section 16(1) of the *Petroleum Act 1984*, the Minister for Mining and Energy invites applications and submissions for the grant of a petroleum exploration permit for the areas described below. This invitation commences on **Thursday, 19 February 2026** and ends at **4pm ACST on Friday, 31 July 2026** (the application period).



Description of Area

Acreage Release Area EPNT26-1

(46 full and 4-part blocks)

Map Sheet SD53 Roper River

Designated Block Numbers

3258, 3259, 3330, 3331, 3332, 3402, 3403, 3404, 3405.

Map Sheet SE53 Newcastle Waters

Designated Block Numbers

14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 86, 87, 88, 89, 158, 159, 160, 161 part, 230, 231, 232, 302, 303, 304, 374, 375, 446, 447, 518, 519, 590, 591, 662, 663, 664, 665, 734 part, 735 part, 736, 737, 807 part, 808, 809, 881, 953, 954.

Acreage Release Area EPNT26-1 may be viewed at <http://strike.nt.gov.au/wss.html>.

The reason why the blocks are intended to be released for exploration

The area proposed for release includes areas within the defined boundaries of the Beetaloo Sub-basin, within the greater McArthur Basin. This is a highly prospective onshore basin with proven unconventional petroleum systems. The area is supported by a substantial subsurface dataset, including 37 wells and more than 9,000 km of seismic data within the sub-basin, as well as regional seismic and well data. This release provides an opportunity to further appraise and develop a strategically important gas resource, supporting domestic energy security.

The Northern Territory Geological Survey assesses the acreage release area as highly prospective for petroleum, with the Beetaloo Sub-basin representing one of Australia's most significant onshore gas provinces. Drilling, testing, and geochemical studies have confirmed a series of working unconventional petroleum systems, characterised by thick, organic-rich shale source rocks with demonstrated hydrocarbon generation, and retention, and supported by recent flow tests indicating significant gas rates and stable production.

Some reservoir-seal pairs within the Beetaloo Sub-basin have also been identified as potential Carbon Capture and Storage targets.

Submissions

The public can comment on the proposed acreage release by lodging a submission under section 16(2)(db) of the *Petroleum Act 1984*. The Minister for Mining and Energy will consider the submissions and make a determination to release the specified blocks for exploration or otherwise. The period during which submissions may be made is the same as the **application period** and are limited to the following:

- (a) if there are other existing or proposed industries for a specified block – whether exploration of the specified block is possible at the same time
- (b) whether the land of a specified block is suitable for exploration.

Note: The submission may submit that the land is not suitable for exploration because the land is subject to intensive agriculture, of high ecological value, of high scenic value, culturally significant or of strategic importance to nearby residential areas.

Submissions are to be emailed to DME.PetroleumRelease@nt.gov.au.

Applications

Applications should be prepared in accordance with section 16(3) of the *Petroleum Act 1984* and submitted to the Department of Mining and Energy prior to **4pm ACST on Friday, 31 July 2026**.

The *Native Title Act 1993*, Right to Negotiate Procedure is used for all petroleum negotiations on pastoral leasehold land. Further details of the application requirements are set out in Northern Territory Petroleum Exploration Permit Application Guidelines. The guidelines and the acreage release data package are available at <https://dme.nt.gov.au/energy/petroleum-acreage-releases>.

Applications together with supporting data for Acreage Release area EPNT26-1 may be submitted to DME.PetroleumRelease@nt.gov.au.

Enquiries may be directed to the Director Petroleum Tenure, on telephone + 61 8 8999 5396 or DME.PetroleumRelease@nt.gov.au.

Dated 11 February 2026

J. R. PRATT

Senior Executive Director Energy Development

Delegate of the Minister for Mining and Energy

Pursuant to an instrument of delegation dated 18 March 2025
