

NSW exploration overview

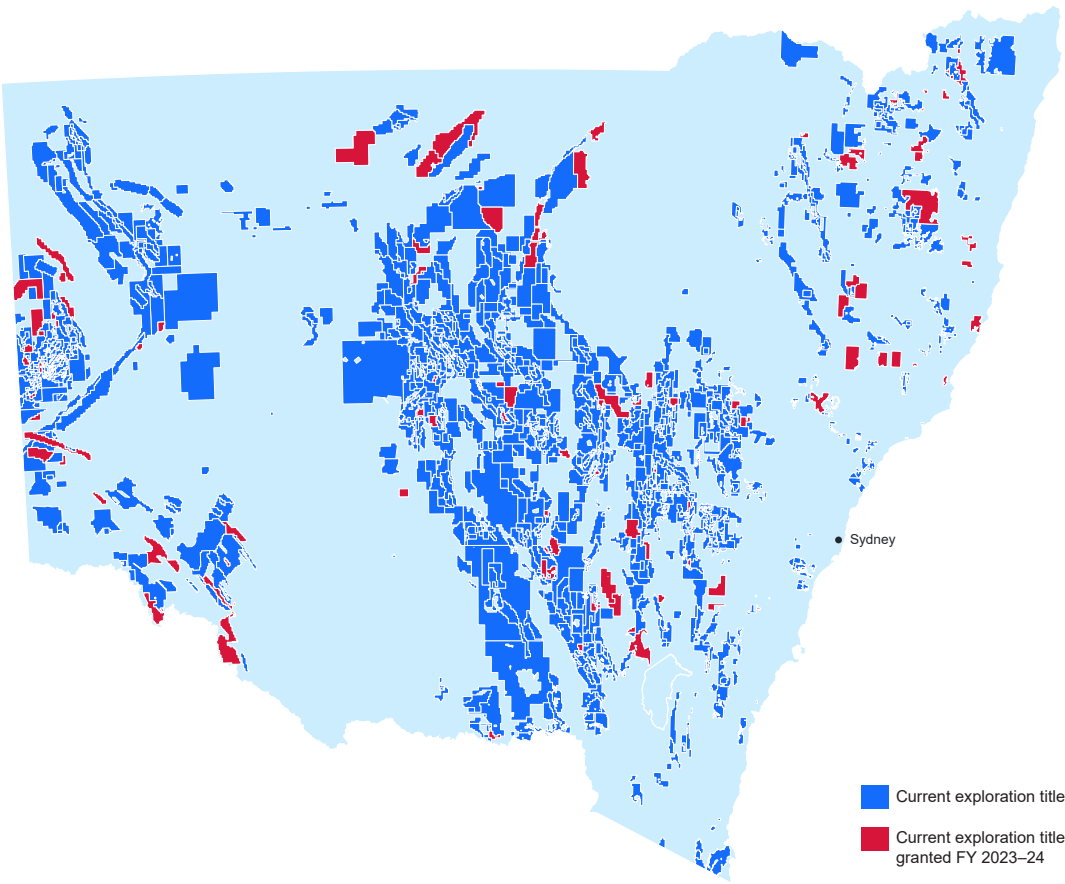
2023–24 financial year

Titles

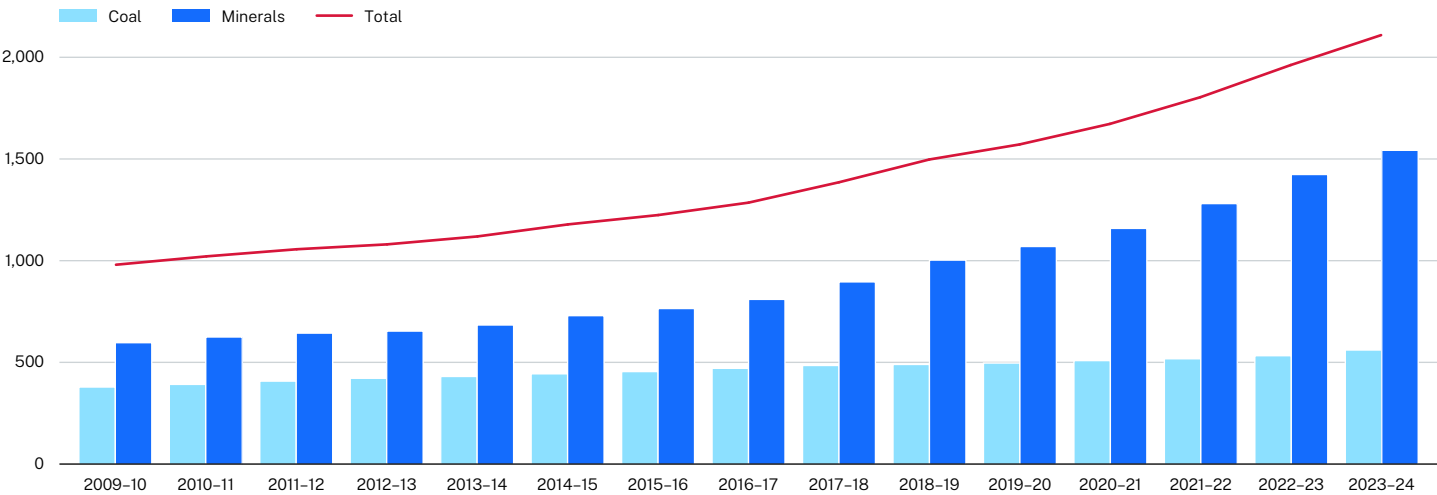
Exploration in New South Wales (NSW) has surged over the last decade with the total number of titles doubling since 2010 to over 2,100 titles currently.

2,100+
titles



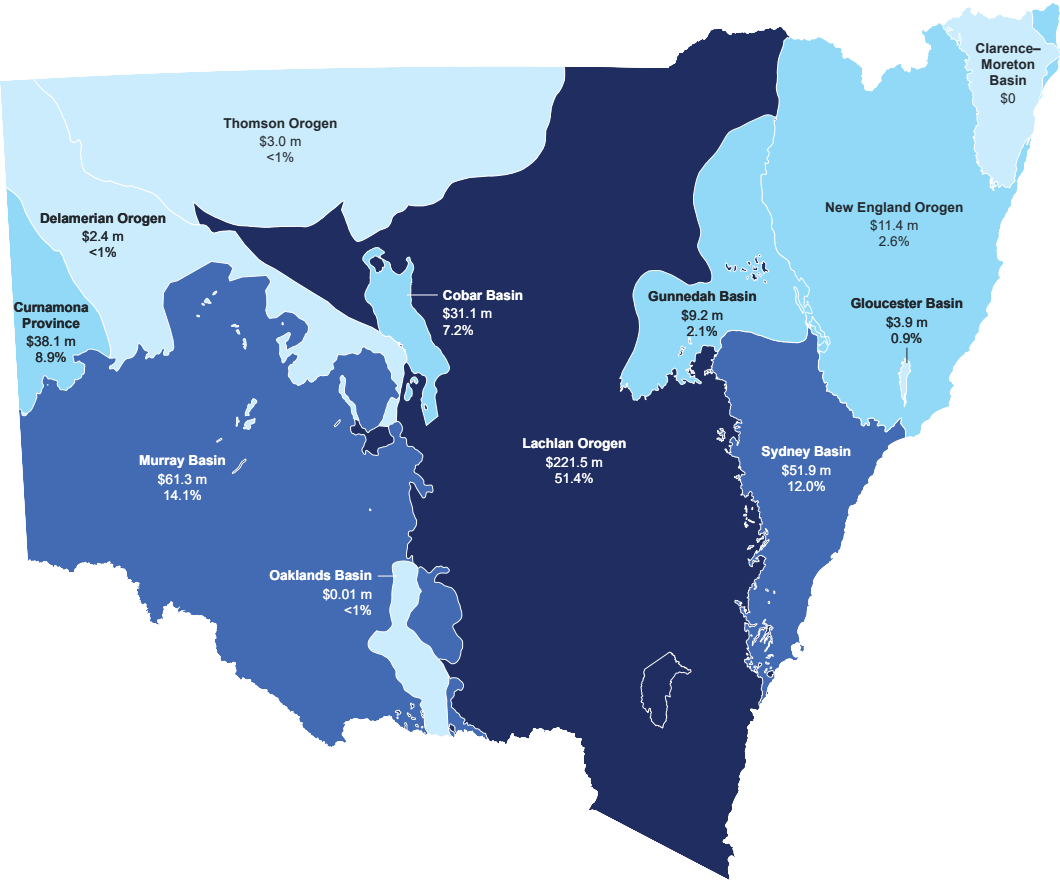


Active titles per financial year



Exploration expenditure

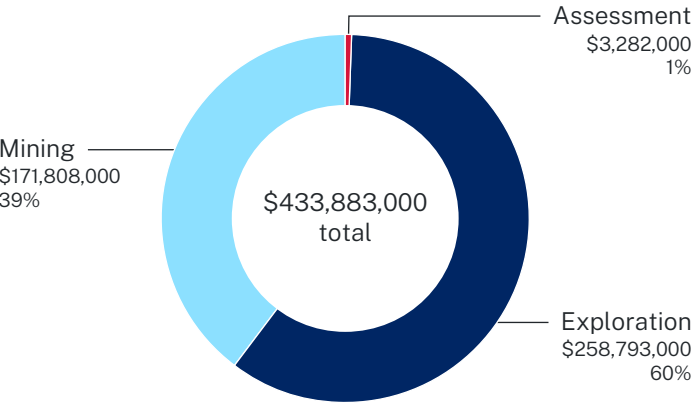
Expenditure by geological province



The Lachlan Orogen, home to world-class deposits including Cadia (Au-Cu), Northparkes (Au-Cu) and Cowal (Au), leads exploration expenditure at \$222 million.



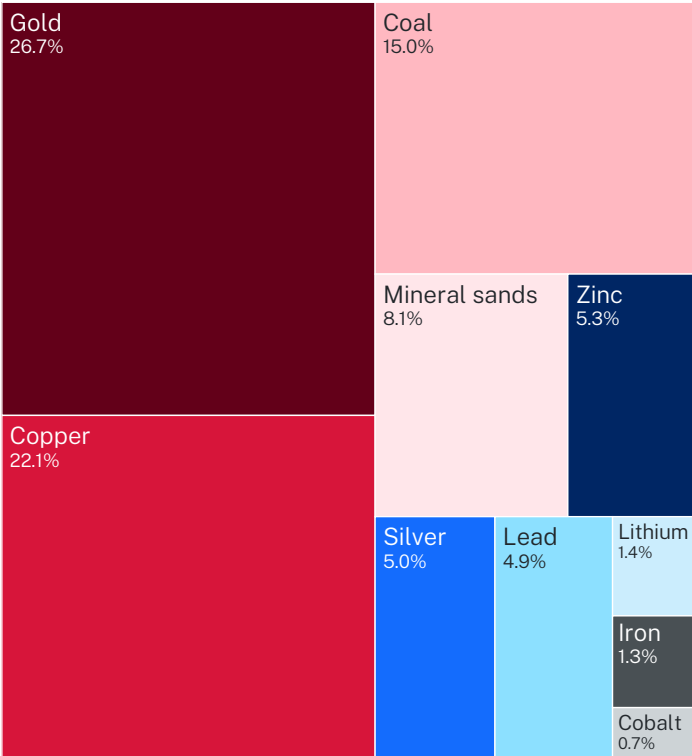
Exploration expenditure by authority type



Total exploration expenditure across all authorities totalled \$434 million, underpinning the sector’s significant contribution to the state’s economy.

Gold (27%) and copper (22%) exploration led expenditure, with significant investment in critical and priority metals exploration including silver (5%), lithium (1%) and cobalt (less than 1%).

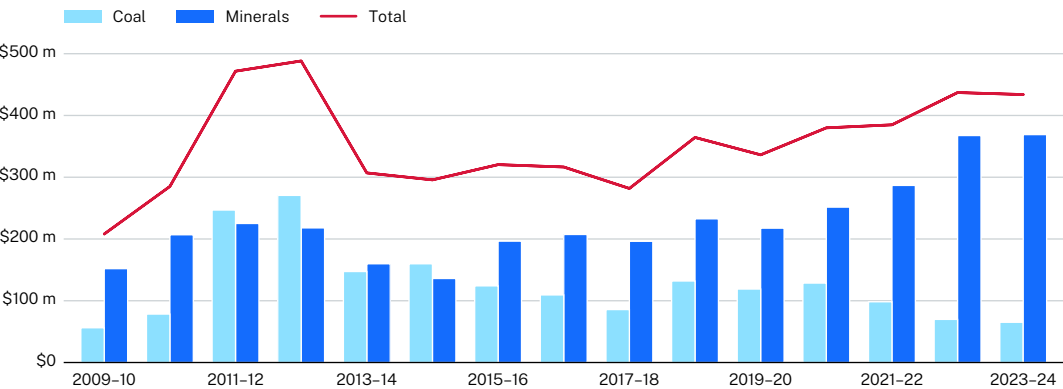
Percentage of total expenditure by top 10 target commodities



For programs targeting multiple commodities, expenditure figures are distributed equally amongst those commodities.

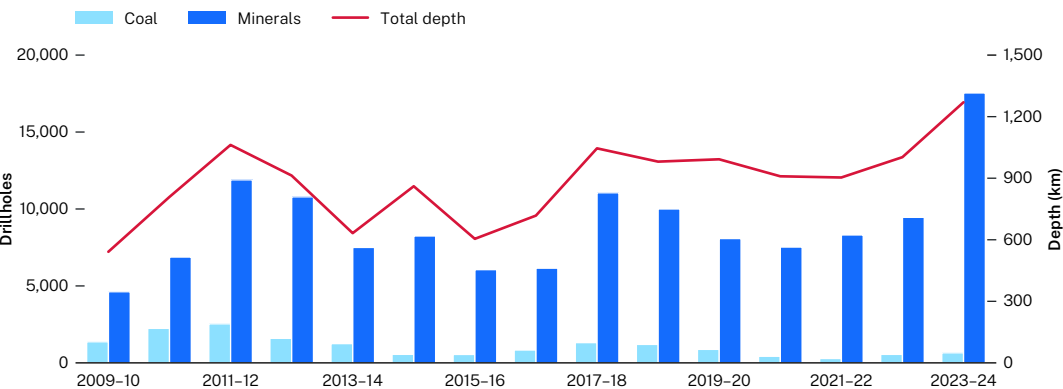
Exploration activities

Exploration expenditure by resource per financial year



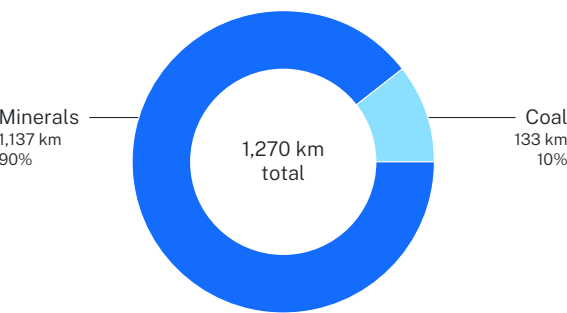
Minerals exploration expenditure reached \$369 million in the 2023-24 financial year, reflecting increased confidence in mineral prospectivity in NSW.

Drillholes and depth by resource per financial year



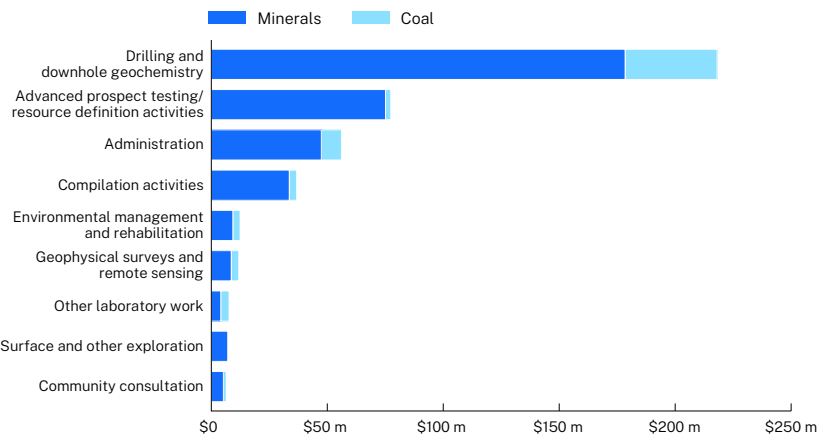
NSW drilling activity has surged to a decade high with over 18,000 exploration drillholes completed during the 2023-24 financial year.

Kilometres drilled by resource



Drilling totalled 1,270 km across NSW with minerals drilling representing the majority at 1,137 km (90%). This in part reflects the sector’s strategic focus on copper-gold and critical mineral exploration in NSW.

Exploration expenditure by activity



Minerals exploration accounts for 85% of total expenditure with drilling being the major exploration activity.

Data derived from annual reports submitted to NSW Resources.

© State of New South Wales through the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development 2025. You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to charge others for access to the publication (other than at cost); include the publication in advertising or a product for sale; modify the publication; or republish the publication on a website. You may freely link to the publication on a departmental website.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (March 2025) and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.