



Highlights from the month of March...

The month started on a positive note on Thursday 1st with an article in The Australian newspaper by **Tom Kenyon**, a Labor Party MP in the South Australian state parliament. Boiling Tom's 750-word essay down to its core, he said "geothermal energy is emission free, cheaper than nuclear, not much more expensive than our present coal and definitely cheaper than coal if allowances are made for geo-sequestration."

Also on Thursday 1st, news emerged through the ABC that **Glenelg Shire Council** in Victoria is "searching the globe for innovative geothermal bore systems" to replace the Portland district heating system decommissioned last year. The Mayor said that "it is in ratepayers' best interests to use geothermal energy [because] over a 20 year lifespan the savings for the community would be in the millions."

On a personal note, on Tuesday 6th yours truly was confirmed as an Australian representative on the Forum (i.e. interim committee) of the **Western Pacific Regional Branch** of the **International Geothermal Association** (or the WPRB-IGA, as we like to call it). The position is provisional until elections are held at the end of 2007. On the same day, I was nominated for a position on the full Board of the IGA. Elections for these positions are also in late 2007. Membership in the IGA is available to all Australian individuals (http://iga.igg.cnr.it/iga_about.php?sub=member). Membership of the WPRB is voluntary to IGA members residing in this part of the world.

Things went very quiet for a couple of weeks. Some might say "too quiet." Then on Friday 16th, **Green Rock Energy** released an update on flow tests from their Ortahaza Project in Hungary. Bottom-hole temperature at Ortaháza No 5 was confirmed at 146°C. Flow was enhanced through acidification of the carbonate reservoir and is considered suitable for supply of energy for direct heat but insufficient for commercial electricity power production. This means that GRK's World Bank insurance policy kicks in and they should get back most of the money they spent on the testing.

On Tuesday 20th, **HDRPL** presented a talk about "The geothermal potential of the Northern Territory" at the Annual Geoscience Exploration Seminar (AGES) in Alice Springs. The talk generated a lot of local interest, with a subsequent story appearing in the Centralian Advocate newspaper and a live-to-air radio interview on ABC local radio.

At a conference in Adelaide on Thursday 22nd, **Dr James Johnson**, Chief of Geoscience Australia's Onshore Energy and Minerals Division, gave some details about how \$59 million will be spent on GA's programme for onshore energy discovery (including geothermal). A significant amount will be spent collecting new radiometric data that



will be useful in identifying regions of radiogenic granites attractive for geothermal exploration. The main areas of investigation will be northern South Australia, the Pilbara and Canning Basin in Western Australia, large tracts of the Northern Territory and north Queensland.

On Friday 23rd, newcomers **Torrens Energy** (TEY) announced that their IPO was “heavily oversubscribed”; so successful, in fact, that it closed early, having easily raised the full \$6,000,000 they were seeking.

Green Rock Energy released more information about their Hungary project in an open briefing on Monday 26th. Sustained flow rates at Ortaháza 5 were approximately 1,100–1,200 cubic metres per day. A flow rate of 2,200 cubic metres per day was required to support a geothermal power plant. Flow rates in excess of the required levels have been achieved in the Pannonian Basin before, and GRK remains confident about the overall project. The next test location will be selected from the zone in the Pannonian Basin where the best water flow rates can be expected.

Arguably the most diverse ever gathering of Australians interested in geothermal energy met at Parliament House in Canberra on Tuesday 27th at the invitation of **Federal Ministers Macfarlane (Resources) and Turnbull (Environment)**. The “Industry Roundtable for the Australian Geothermal Energy Sector” was at once a chance for the geothermal sector as a whole to enjoy some quality time and interaction with both Ministers (albeit half an hour), and the beginning of a process to create a “development framework” for the sector. The general feeling of the group (or the small sample I spoke to) was that both Ministers were engaged and supportive of geothermal energy and keen to help smooth major impediments to development. For example, at the suggestion that the REDI funding scheme is not well suited to applications for geothermal energy projects, Minister Macfarlane replied with “I bet it will be tomorrow.”

Torrens Energy Limited burst onto the Australian Stock Exchange at 12:30 EST on Friday 30th. Their 20¢ shares began trading at 35¢ and closed on the first day at 33.5¢.

EDE: 0.570 (-00.9%)
GRK: 0.043 (-17.3%)

GDY: 1.07 (-14.4%)
PTR: 0.85 (-04.5%)

GHT: 0.700 (+48.9%)
TEY: 0.335 (---)