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PALYNOLOGICAL ANALYSIS, AMBERJACK-1
GIPPSLAND BASIN

by

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INTRODUCTION

Twenty eight sidewall core and two cuttings samples, representing the interval 1010.0 to 1700m in Amberjack-1 were processed and examined for spore-pollen and dinoflagellates.

With the exception of SWCs between 1495 and 1632m, yields and preservation were medium to high and most samples yielded diagnostic species. It is noted that spore-pollen does not allow the carbonates overlying Top of Latrobe to be dated with the same degree of precision as planktonic foraminifera.

Palynological determinations and interpreted lithological units are summarized below. Interpretative and basic data are given in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. Check lists of all species recorded are attached. Electric log data were unavailable.

SUMMARY

AGE	UNIT	ZONE	DEPTH RANGE (m)	ENVIRONMENT
?Mid-Late Miocene	GIPPSLAND LIMESTONE	T. bellus?	1010.0	open marine
Late Oligocene -Early Miocene	"	P. tuberculatus	1031.0-1210.4	"
"	LAKES ENTRANCE FORMATION	P. tuberculatus	1215.2-1248.1	"
Early Oligocene	unnamed shale	P. tuberculatus	1255.0	open marine
Late Eocene	LATROBE GROUP	Middle N. asperus	1279.9-1333.0	marginal marine
Middle Eocene	"	Lower N. asperus	1351.0-1360.1	"
"	"	Lower N. asperus	1441.0	coastal plain
Early Eocene	"	P. asperopolus	1495.5-1519.0	"
"	"	Lower M. diversus	1633.0	"
Paleocene	"	Upper L. balmei	1697-1700	"

GEOLOGICAL COMMENTS

1. It is unclear whether Amberjack-1 contains a continuous sequence of zones from the Paleocene Upper *L. balmei* Zone to the late Early Miocene *T. bellus* Zone or - the preferred option - whether sediment accumulation at the wellsite has been characterized by long periods of erosion or slow or non-deposition during the Early Eocene and ?Early Oligocene.
2. This uncertainty is due (i) to the possibility of bioturbation and reworking across Top of Latrobe, blurring the distinction between the Middle and Upper *N. asperus* Zone and Upper *N. asperus* and *P. tuberculatus* Zone palynofloras, and (ii) the unsuitable nature of many Early Eocene facies for preserving palynomorphs.
3. The occurrence at 1255.0m of a [calcareous?] claystone at the base of the *P. tuberculatus* Zone strongly suggests that Amberjack-1 has penetrated the equivalent of the latest Eocene-Early Oligocene shale unit overlying non-calcareous siltstones in Perch-2 and adjacent wells such as Bullnose-1.

The presence or not of a greensand between 1279.9-1325.0m may be helpful in determining if the silty sandstone sampled at 1279.9m is related genetically to the above unit, i.e. Upper *N. asperus* Zone, or to the underlying Middle *N. asperus* Zone claystone interval.

4. The sporadic occurrences of diverse spore-pollen between 1441.0-1633.0m confirm the existence of *P. asperopolus* [plus Upper *M. diversus*?] and Lower *M. diversus* Zone units but as yet no Middle *M. diversus* Zone unit has been substantiated in this sector of the basin. Thicknesses in Amberjack-1 [maximum 192m] are consistent with thinning of Early Eocene sediments as these onlap the margin of the basin [cf Palmer-1].
5. Amberjack-1 almost certainly terminated within (Upper) *L. balmei* Zone sediments, consistent with palynological data for Palmer-1.

PALAEOENVIRONMENTS

1. With the possible exception of cuttings at 1697m, all Paleocene and Early Eocene samples represent a coastal plain environment.
- 2.. Marginal marine conditions were established at the well-site within the Middle Eocene Lower *N. asperus* Zone given the absence of dinocysts at 1441.0m and their abundance some 80m upsection at 1360.1m. The latter may be a correlative of the *A. diktyoplokus* marine transgression of Partridge (1976).

Similar conditions were maintained throughout the Late Eocene, with open marine conditions being present at the wellsite by Late Oligocene, P. tuberculatus Zone times.

BIOSTRATIGRAPHY

Zone and age-determinations have been made using criteria proposed by Stover & Partridge (1973), Helby et al. (1987) and unpublished observations made on Gippsland Basin wells drilled by Esso Australia Ltd.

It is noted that spore-pollen criteria published in Stover & Partridge (1973) for subdividing the Oligocene-Early Miocene *P. tuberculatus* Zone are no longer considered reliable (see Macphail & Truswell, 1989). Dinoflagellates may provide an alternative method, but to date the relevant formations in the Gippsland Basin have not closely sampled or all the species systematically recorded.

Upper Lygistepollenites balmei Zone 1697-1700m Paleocene

Palynofloras in this interval are characterized by frequent Lygistepollenites balmei and multiple specimens of other species which also range no higher than this zone, e.g. Gambierina radata, Latrobosporites amplus and [1700m] Camarozonosporites bullatus. Cupanieidites orthoteichus is frequent in the SWC at 1698.0m and present in cuttings at 1697m, picked as the top of the zone.

All palynofloras included Oligo-Miocene dinoflagellates and [1697m] the Paleocene species Glaphyrocysta reticulata. It is unclear whether this species is in situ and therefore evidence for a marine influence.

Lower Malvacipollis diversus 1633.0m Early Eocene

One sample is provisionally assigned to this zone, based on Crassiretitriletes vanraadshoovenii, frequent occurrences of Polypodiaceoisporites varus and frequent-common specimens of Malvacipollis diversus. A few specimens of Lygistepollenites balmei in this palynoflora are assumed to be contaminants. Dinoflagellates are absent.

Sidewall cores between 1542.5-1589.0m yielded sparse palynofloras in which the majority of spore-pollen and all dinoflagellates appear to be caved. Isolated occurrences of Proteacidites pachypodus at 1542.5m, Conbaculites apiculatus at 1566.4m and 1589.0m and frequent Malvacipollis diversus at 1575.0m are consistent with an Early Eocene date, probably no older than Upper M. diversus Zone.

Proteacidites asperopolus 1495.5-1519.0m Early Eocene

The association of Proteacidites asperopolus and frequent P. pachypolus with Myrtaceidites tenuis and Intratriporopollenites notabilis provide a very confident P. asperopolus Zone date for the SWC sample at 1519.0m.

The SWC at 1495.5m is no younger than P. asperopolus Zone, based on a single specimen of M. tenuis in a very sparse and mud-contaminated palynoflora.

Lower Nothofaqidites asperus Zone 1351.0-1441.0m

The three palynofloras within this interval are characterized by common-abundant Nothofaqidites emarcidus-heterus and Proteacidites spp.

The sample picked as the base of the zone [1441.0m] is confidently dated as Lower N. asperus Zone, based on the simultaneous occurrence of the zone index species Proteacidites asperopolus and Tricolpites simatus. However unusually for this zone, Beaupreadites verrucosus, Malvacipollis spp. and Myrtaceidites parvus-mesolesus also are frequent.

Both the above index species occur at 1360.1m but at this level the assemblage also includes a number of typically Eocene dinoflagellates, e.g. Areosphaeridium capricornum, as well as an undescribed Alisocysta and long-ranging species of Spiniferites and Operculodinium.

The upper boundary is placed provisionally at 1351.0m, a sample which is no older than Lower N. asperus Zone or younger than Middle N. asperus Zone based on specimens of Rugulatisporites trophus and Proteacidites pachypolus respectively. As at 1360.1m, the palynoflora includes low numbers of undiagnostic marine dinoflagellates.

Middle Nothofaqidites asperus Zone 1279.9-1333.0m Late Eocene

Palynofloras in this interval are wholly dominated by Nothofaqidites spp. All include low to moderate numbers of marine dinocysts, chiefly Gippslandica extensa.

The lower boundary is defined by the first occurrence of Anacolosidites sectus at 1333.0m. Proteacidites pachypolus indicates the sample is no younger than Middle N. asperus Zone. The zone index species, Triorites magnificus, occurs at 1325.0m.

The palynoflora at 1279.9m is similar in terms of species composition and is certainly no older than upper Middle *N. asperus* Zone based on *Aglaoareidia qualumis*. However, given the absence of definite zone index species, an Upper *N. asperus* Zone date remains possible if the single specimen of *Proteacidites pachypodus* is reworked. It is noted that occurrences of *P. recavus* and the dinoflagellate *Gippslandica extensa* are more consistent with a Late Eocene rather than an Oligocene date but all species are known to range above the Middle *N. asperus* Zone outside of the Gippsland Basin.

Proteacidites tuberculatus Zone 1031.0-1255.0m Oligocene-Early Miocene

Palynofloras within this interval are wholly dominated by marine dinoflagellates, in particular *Linqulodinium machaeophorum*, *Operculodinium centrocarpum*, *Spiniferites* and *Steptodinium* spp. Spore-pollen numbers are variable and *Nothofaqidites emarcidus-heterus* consistently dominates what is recovered.

The lower boundary is defined by the first appearance of *Cyatheacidites annulatus* at 1255.0m. This palynoflora includes an undescribed *Deflandrea* sp. [related to *D. leptodermata*] and a *Psilodiporites* sp. which is ancestral to modern *Alyxia* [Apocynaceae: see Macphail & Truswell, 1989]. *Acaciapollenites myriospores* first appears at 1226.6m, *Foveotriletes lacunosus* at 1218.8m, and *F. crater* associated with *Chenopodipollis chenopodiaceoides* and *Tubulifloridites antipoda* at 1138.8m.

A number of unusual faunal microfossils are preserved in the interval: e.g. trochospiral liners of foraminifera, fish teeth and - possibly a first record in Australia - fragmented and whole nematocysts [stinging cells] of a unidentified Cnidarian.

The upper boundary is placed at 1031.0m, based on the occurrence of *Cyatheacidites annulatus* and *Chenopodipollis chenopodiaceoides* in an assemblage lacking index species of the *T. bellus* Zone. *Alyxia* and *Tricolpites reticulatus* are present in this palynoflora and also at 1050.0m

Triporopollenites bellus Zone? 1010.0m late Early Miocene?

The palynoflora at 1010.0m may be *T. bellus* Zone, based on a badly corroded, possible specimen of the nominate species and an undescribed dinocyst [*Protoellipsodinium cf simplex*] which

typically occurs only above the P. tuberculatus Zone. The sample definitely is no older than P. tuberculatus Zone or younger than T. bellus Zone.

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TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF INTERPRETATIVE PALINOLOGICAL DATA

SWC	DEPTH (m)	S-P .	ZONE DINO	CONF. RTG.	COMMENT
60	1010.0	T. bell.	-	2	No older than P. tub.
59	1031.0	P. tub.	-	1	C. annulatus
58	1050.0	P. tub.	-	1	C. annulatus
57	1095.9	P. tub.	-	1	C. chenopodiacy
56	1111.5	P. tub.	-	1	F. crater
55	1138.8	P. tub.	-	1	T. antipoda
54	1160.0	P. tub.	-	1	F. lacunosus
53	1210.4	P. tub.	-	0	Reworked P. pachypolus
51	1215.2	P. tub.	-	1	D. mammilatus
50	1218.8	P. tub.	-	0	C. annulatus
49	1226.6	P. tub.	-	1	A. myriospores
48	1236.0	P. tub.	-	2	P. demarcatus
47	1248.1	P. tub.	-	2	I. anquuloclavat.
46	1255.0	P. tub.	-	0	C. annulatus
33	1279.9	M. N.a. G. extensa	2		P. pachypolus
29	1325.0	M. N.a. G. extensa	0		T. magnificus
28	1333.0	M. N.a. G. extensa	0		A. sectus
26	1351.0	L. N.a.	-	2	N. falcatus
23	1360.1	L. N.a. A. dicty.?	0		P. asperopolus
19	1441.0	L. N.a.	-	0	P. asperopolus
12	1495.5	P. asp.	-	2	M. tenuis
11	1519.0	P. asp.	-	0	P. asperopolus
10	1542.5	No older than Upper M. div.		P. asperopolus	
09	1566.4	Indet.	-	-	C. apiculatus
08	1575.0	Indet.	-	-	Mud contaminants only
07	1589.0	Indet.	-	-	C. apiculatus
06	1633.0	L. M.d.	-	1	C. vanraadshoov.
ctg	1697	U.L.b.	-	3	C. orthoteichus
03	1698.0	U. L.b.	-	1	L. balmei freq.
ctg	1700	U. L.b.	-	3	C. bullatus

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF BASIC PALYNOLOGICAL DATA

SWC	DEPTH (m)	YIELD		DIVERSITY		PRES.	LITH.*
		S-P	DINO	S-P	DINO		
60	1010.0	low	high	med.	med.	poor	marl
59	1031.0	med.	v. high	med.	med.	mod.	marl
58	1050.0	med.	high	med.	high	good	marl
57	1095.9	low	low	low	med.	mod.	marl
56	1111.5	med.	high	med.	med.	poor	marl
55	1138.8	med.	high	med.	med.	mod.	marl
54	1160.0	low	v. high	low	high	mod.	marl
53	1210.4	med.	high	med.	high	good	marl
51	1215.2	low	low	low	low	mod.	marl
50	1218.8	med.	high	med.	low	mod.	marl
49	1226.6	low	med.	low	low	mod.	marl
48	1236.0	low	med.	low	low	mod.	marl
47	1248.1	low	low	low	low	mod.	marl
46	1255.0	med.	v. high	med.	high	mod.	cilst.
33	1279.9	med.	low	high	low	good	Sltv sst
29	1325.0	high	low	med.	low	poor	cilst.
28	1333.0	high	low	med.	low	good	slst.
26	1351.0	med.	low	med.	low	mod.	s lst.
23	1360.1	high	low	high	low	mod.	cilst.
19	1441.0	high	-	med.	-	mod.	s lst.
12	1495.5	low	caved	low	low	mod.	cilst.
11	1519.0	low	-	high	-	good	cilst.
10	1542.5	low	caved	low	low	mod.	s lst.
09	1566.4	low	caved	low	low	mod.	cilst.
08	1575.0	low	-	low	-	mod.	cilst.
07	1589.0	low	-	low	-	mod.	cilst.
06	1633.0	high	-	med.	-	good	cilst.
ctg	1697	med.	caved	med.	low	poor	cilst.
03	1698.0	low	-	high	-	poor	Slst.
ctg	1700	med.	caved	med.	low	poor	cilst.

* Lithological descriptions [main rock type only] taken from sidewall core sample description on transmittal sheets.

SAMPLE TYPE OR NO. *	1010.0	1031.0	1050.0	1065.9	1111.5	1138.8	1160.0	1204.4	1215.2	1218.8	1226.6	1236.0	1240.1	1255.0	1279.9	1325.0	1333.0	1351.0	1360.1	1411.0	1495.5	1519.0	1542.5	1565.4	1575.0	1589.0
(a) DEPTHS																										
FOSSIL NAMES																										
Acaciapollenites myriospores																										
Aglaoreidites qualumis																										
Anacolosidites sectus																										
Araucariacites australis	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Australalopollis obscurus																										
Baculatisporites disconformis																										
Banksiaeidites arcuatus																										
B. elongatus	•	•	•	•																						
Basopollis otwayensis																										
Beupreaidites elegansiformis																										
B. trigonalis																										
B. verrucosus																										
Camarozonosporites bullatus																										
C. heskermensis																										
Chenopodipollis chenopodiaceoides	•	•	•	•																						
Clavifera triplex																										
Conbaculites apiculatus																										
Concolpites leptos																										
Corollinia spp. R																										
Grassiretitritiles vanraadshoovenii																										
Cupaneidites orthoteichus	•																									
Cyatheacidites annulatus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cyathidites australis	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
C. minor	•	•	•																							
C. palaeospora	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
C. splendens	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
C. subtilis																										
Dacrycarpites australiensis																										
Dicotetradites meridianus																										
Dictyophyllidites arcuatus	•																									
Dilwynites granulatus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
D. tuberculatus	•																									
Diporites delicatus																										
Dodonaea triquetra-type																										
Elphedripites notensis																										
Ericipites scabrus																										
Foveotrilites baiteus																										
F. crater	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
F. lacunosus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Gambierina edwardstii																										
G. rudata																										
Gleicheniidites spp.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Gothanipollis bassensis																										
Gramminidites media																										
Gyropollis psilatus																										
Haloragacidites cainozoica	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
H. harrisii	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Herkosporites elliotii																										
Ilexpollenites anguloclavatus																										
Integriconpus antipoda																										
Intratriboporopollenites notabilis																										
Ischyosporites gremius	•																									
I. irregularis																										
Kuyllisporites waterbolkii	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Laevigatosporites spp.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

* C=CORE S=SIDEWALL CORE
 T=CUTTINGS J=JUNK BASKET

R = REWORKED SP.
 C = CONTAMINANT

* C=CORE S=SIDEWALL CORE
T=CUTTINGS J=JUNK BASKET

R - REWORKED SP.
C - CONTAMINANT

SAMPLE TYPE OR NO. *	DEPTH (m)	1000.0	1031.0	1050.0	1095.9	1111.5	1138.8	1160.0	1204.4	1215.2	1218.8	1226.6	1236.0	1246.1	1255.0	1279.9	1325.0	1333.0	1351.0	1360.1	1441.0	1495.5	1519.0	1542.5	1566.4	1575.0	1589.0
FOSSIL NAMES																											
<i>Proteacidites recavus</i>																											
<i>P. rectomarginis</i>																											
<i>P. reticuloscabrus</i>																											
<i>P. rugulatus</i>																											
<i>P. tenuileinxus</i>																											
<i>P. truncatus</i>																											
<i>P. tuberculatus</i>																											
<i>P. spp.</i>																											
<i>Pseudowinterapollis calathus</i>																											
<i>P. cranwellae</i>																											
<i>Psilodiporites sp. [Alyxia]</i>																											
<i>Quintiapollis psilatispora</i>																											
<i>Retitriletes australoclavatidites</i>																											
<i>R. spp.</i>																											
<i>Rhoipites sphaerica</i>																											
<i>Rugulatisporites cowrensis</i>																										C	
<i>R. mallatus</i>																											
<i>R. trophus</i>																											
<i>Rubipollis oblates</i>																											
<i>Santaluminidites cainozoicus</i>																											
<i>Sapotaceoidae pollenites rotundus</i>																											
<i>Simpsonipollis sp.</i>																											
<i>Stereisporites australis f. crassa</i>																											
<i>S. (Tripunctisporis) sp.</i>																											
<i>S. spp.</i>																											
<i>Tetracolporites multistriatus</i>																											
<i>T. verrucosus</i>																											
<i>Tricolpites phillipsii</i>																											
<i>T. reticulatus</i>																											
<i>T. simatus</i>																											
<i>Tricolporites adelaidensis</i>																											
<i>T. angurium</i>																											
<i>T. hallis</i>																											
<i>T. leuros</i>																											
<i>T. sp. cf T. leuros</i>																											
<i>T. paenestriatus</i>																											
<i>T. scabritus</i>																											
<i>Indet. tricolpate/tricolporates</i>																											
<i>Indet. trilete spores</i>																											
<i>Triletes tuberculiformis</i>																											
<i>Triporopollenites ambiguus</i>																											
<i>T. heleosus</i>																											
<i>T. spinosus</i>																											
<i>Tubulifloridites antipoda</i>																											
<i>Verrucosisporites cristatus</i>																											
<i>V. kopukuensis</i>																											
<i>Anacolosidites acutullus</i>																											
<i>Cupaniedites reticularis</i>																											
<i>Milfordia homeopunctatus</i>																											
<i>M. hypolaenoides</i>																											
<i>Nothofagidites longispina</i>																											
<i>Proteacidites grandis</i>																											
<i>P. stipplatus</i>																											
<i>Schizocolpus marlinensis</i>																											
<i>Triorites magnificus</i>																											

* C=CORE S=SIDEWALL CORE
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T=CUTTINGS J=JUNK BASKET

R - REWORKED SP.
C - CONTAMINANT

PALYNOLOGY DATA SHEET

BASIN: GIPPSLAND ELEVATION: KB: GL:
WELL NAME: AMBERJACK-1 TOTAL DEPTH:

AGE	PALYNOLOGICAL ZONES	HIGHEST DATA						LOWEST DATA					
		Preferred Depth	Rtg	Alternate Depth	Rtg	Two Way Time	Preferred Depth	Rtg	Alternate Depth	Rtg	Two Way Time		
NEOGENE	<i>T. pleistocenicus</i>												
	<i>M. lipsis</i>												
	<i>C. bifurcatus</i>												
	<i>T. bellus</i>	1010.0	2					1010.0	2				
	<i>P. tuberculatus</i>	1031.0	1					1255.0	1				
	Upper <i>N. asperus</i>												
	Mid <i>N. asperus</i>	1279.9	2	1325.0	0			1333.0	0				
	Lower <i>N. asperus</i>	1351.0	2	1360.1	0			1441.0	0				
	<i>P. asperopolus</i>	1495.5	2	1519.0	0			1519.0	0				
	Upper <i>M. diversus</i>												
PALEogene	Mid <i>M. diversus</i>												
	Lower <i>M. diversus</i>	1633.0	1					1633.0	1				
	Upper <i>L. balmei</i>	1697	3	1698.0	1			1700	3	1698.0	1		
	Lower <i>L. balmei</i>												
	Upper <i>T. longus</i>												
	Lower <i>T. longus</i>												
	<i>T. lilliei</i>												
	<i>N. senectus</i>												
	<i>T. apoxyexinus</i>												
	<i>P. mawsonii</i>												
LATE CRETACEOUS	<i>A. distocarinatus</i>												
	<i>C. paradoxus</i>												
	<i>C. striatus</i>												
	<i>F. asymmetricus</i>												
	<i>F. wonthaggiensis</i>												
	<i>C. australiensis</i>												
	PRE-CRETACEOUS												

COMMENTS:

Gippslandica (Deflandrea) extensa Zone 1279.9-1333.0m

The SWC sample at 1542.5m is no older than Upper *M. diversus* Zone

CONFIDENCE

RATING:

- O: SWC or Core, Excellent Confidence, assemblage with zone species of spores, pollen and microplankton.
- 1: SWC or Core, Good Confidence, assemblage with zone species of spores and pollen or microplankton.
- 2: SWC or Core, Poor Confidence, assemblage with non-diagnostic spores, pollen and/or microplankton.
- 3: Cuttings, Fair Confidence, assemblage with zone species of either spores and pollen or microplankton, or both.
- 4: Cuttings, No Confidence, assemblage with non-diagnostic spores, pollen and/or microplankton.

NOTE:

If an entry is given a 3 or 4 confidence rating, an alternative depth with a better confidence rating should be entered, if possible. If a sample cannot be assigned to one particular zone, then no entry should be made, unless a range of zones is given where the highest possible limit will appear in one zone and the lowest possible limit in another.

DATA RECORDED BY:

M.K. Macphail

DATE: 18 September 1990

DATA REVISED BY:

DATE: