

PALYNOLogy OF 24 MOSTLY TERTIARY SAMPLES
FROM CODRINGTON 1, EUMERALLA 1, GREENSLOPES 1,
KILLARA 1, MAJABA 1, NORTH EUMERALLA 1, PRETTY HILL 1
AND SHAW 1, ONSHORE OTWAY BASIN, VICTORIA

ROGER MORGAN

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MORGAN PALAEO ASSOCIATES

PALYNOLOGICAL/PETROLEUM GEOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

POSTAL ADDRESS: Box 161, Marland, South Australia 5573
DELIVERIES: 1 Shannon Ic, Marland, South Australia 5573
Phone (088) 32 2795 Fax (088) 32 2798

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ROGER MORGAN

for VICTORIAN DEPT ENERGY AND MINERALS

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OTW RPCODEUM



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FIGURE 1 : ZONAL FRAMEWORK

FIGURE 2 : CRETACEOUS REGIONAL FRAMEWORK, OTWAY BASIN

320m(cutts) : *asperus* (or upper *diversus*) Zone : Early Eocene : apparently marginal marine, but marine elements could be caved : Dilwyn is consistent.

400m(cutts) : upper *diversus* Zone : Early Eocene : apparently marginal marine : Dilwyn Formation is likely.

690m(cutts), 785m(cutts) : upper or middle *diversus* Zones : Early Eocene : apparently brackish : rich yields with common amorphous organic matter dilute the age diagnostic taxa. The Dilwyn/Pember boundary usually falls in the middle *diversus* Zone.

900m(cutts), 1100m(cutts) : middle *diversus* Zone : Early Eocene : brackish to marginal marine : The Fember/Dilwyn boundary usually falls in this Subzone.

1400m(cutts) : lower *diversus* Zone : Early Eocene : marginal marine : Pember assignment is likely.

1460m(cutts) : lower *balmeri* Zone : Paleocene : marginal marine : Pebble Point equivalent is indicated.

NORTH EUMERALLA-1

374.7-377.8m(cutts) : probably upper *diversus* with heavy *asperus* caving. : Early or Middle Eocene : marginally marine : Dilwyn Formation close to the base of the Nirranda Group seems likely.

767.8-770.8m(cutts) : indeterminate

PRETTY HILL-1

390.6-396.7m(core) : middle *diversus* Zone : Early Eocene : marginally marine : Dilwyn Formation is therefore indicated, not Nirranda.

588-91m(cutts) : *balmeri* Zone : Paleocene : marginally marine : Pebble Point or basal Pember Formation are both possible.

SHAW-1

280m(cutts) : apparently *tuberculatus* Zone : Oligocene : nearshore marine : Nirranda Subgroup seems likely, certainly not Dilwyn.

325m(cutts) : lower *asperus* Zone (*heterophlycta* Dino Zone) : Middle Eocene : nearshore marine : Nirranda Group is indicated. Top Dilwyn must be below this point.

I SUMMARY

Resolution is restricted in many of these samples due to the availability of cuttings only. Downhole caving may therefore be masking older ages with older reworking difficult to interpret. Where this is suspected, I have highlighted it.

CODRINGTON-1

417.4m(cutts) : *asperus* Zone : middle to Late Eocene : intermediate marine : Nirranda Sub Group is favoured and McPunga Formation certainly possible.

469.2m(cutts), 481.4m(cutts), 670m(cutts) : lean apparently middle *diversus* Zone with caved *asperus* Zone : Early Eocene : marginal to brackish marine although marine influence could be largely caved : Either all Pember equivalent or some Pember and some Dilwyn is likely.

688.6m(cutts) : lower *diversus* Zone : Early Eocene : marginal marine : Pember equivalent rather than Dilwyn.

EUMERALLA-1

767.8-770.8m(cutts) : apparently middle *diversus* Zone : Early Eocene : marginally marine : lower Dilwyn or upper Pember equivalent is therefore suggested.

813.5-816.6m(cutts) : apparently *senectus* Zone/*australis* Dinoflagellate Zone : Campanian : marginal marine : assuming the oldest elements are in place, the Paaratta Formation is favoured.

GREENSLOPES-1

390-400m(cutts) : *longus* Zone : Maastrichtian : nearshore marine : topmost Cretaceous Paaratta Formation equivalent.

~~450-600m(cutts) : *parvulus* Zone with younger caving : Maastrichtian : apparently nearshore but marine elements may be caved : apparently topmost Eumeralla, but Paaratta Flaxmans is possible.~~

KILLARA-1

444m(cutts) : apparently *longus* Zone with caved *balmei* (Paleocene) and trace reworked *senectus* Zone (Campanian) : apparently Maastrichtian : marginal marine : overall, Paaratta assignment seems most likely.

NAJABA-1 Sample size was on the small side, so yields are generally poor.

II INTRODUCTION

This sample suite was submitted by Greg Parker of the Victorian Department of Energy and Minerals as part of a study of the onshore Otway Basin.

Palynomorph occurrence data are shown as Appendix 1 and from the basis for the assignment of the samples to the Tertiary and Cretaceous Zones.

The Tertiary zonation is basically that of Stover and Evans (1973) and Stover and Partridge (1973) as modified by Partridge (1976) and shown in Figure 1.

The Cretaceous spore-pollen zonation is essentially that of Dettmann and Playford (1960) combined with Stover and Evans (1973) and Stover and Partridge (1973). This framework has been significantly modified and improved by various authors since, and most recently discussed in Helby et al (1987), and modified in the Early Cretaceous by Morgan (1985) for application in the Otway Basin, as shown in Figure 2.

Sample processing usually involves the following steps. Extra techniques are only used if required:

- (a) digest about 10gm of crushed rock in 50% HF overnight.
- (b) wash out several times over 10 micron polyester sieve. Acidify with conc HCl if fluorosilicate gel forms.
- (c) heavy liquid separation used concentrated ZnBr₂ with SG of 2.0.
- (d) wash out float fraction over 10 micron polyester sieve. Acidify if Zn(OH)₂ precipitate forms.
- (e) mount a sieved kerogen slide.
- (f) ~~oxidise in Schultze solution (conc 30% HNO₃ with crystalline KClO₃)~~
- (g) wash out over 10 micron polyester sieve.
- (h) add 5% KOH to dissolve humic acids.
- (i) wash out over 10 micron polyester sieve.
- (j) examine under microscope for satisfactory oxidation. Repeat steps (f) to (i) if required.
- (k) heavy liquid separation using ZnBr₂ solution (SG of 2.0).
- (l) wash out float fraction using polyester sieve. Acidify if Zn(OH)₂ precipitate forms.
- (m) dehydrate onto coverslip.
- (n) mount microscope slides using Eukitt medium.

Sample examination usually involves the following steps:

- (a) scan two traverses at $\times 10$ to log the bulk of the assemblage and get some idea of age.
- (b) scan at $\times 40$ and count the first 100 specimens to get percentage contents for each species. From this, "Saline Microplankton Content" (%) can be developed to provide an index of marine influence. While the sample is too lean to provide 100 specimens, frequency is estimated from the specimens seen with A=abundant, C=common, F=frequent, R=rare.
- (c) return to $\times 10$ to scan at least two large coverslips to log rare species, and finalise age conclusions. Log more slides if required.
- (d) examine sieved kerogen slide for specimens of *Cyathidites* to establish spore colour for Spore Colour Maturity Index.

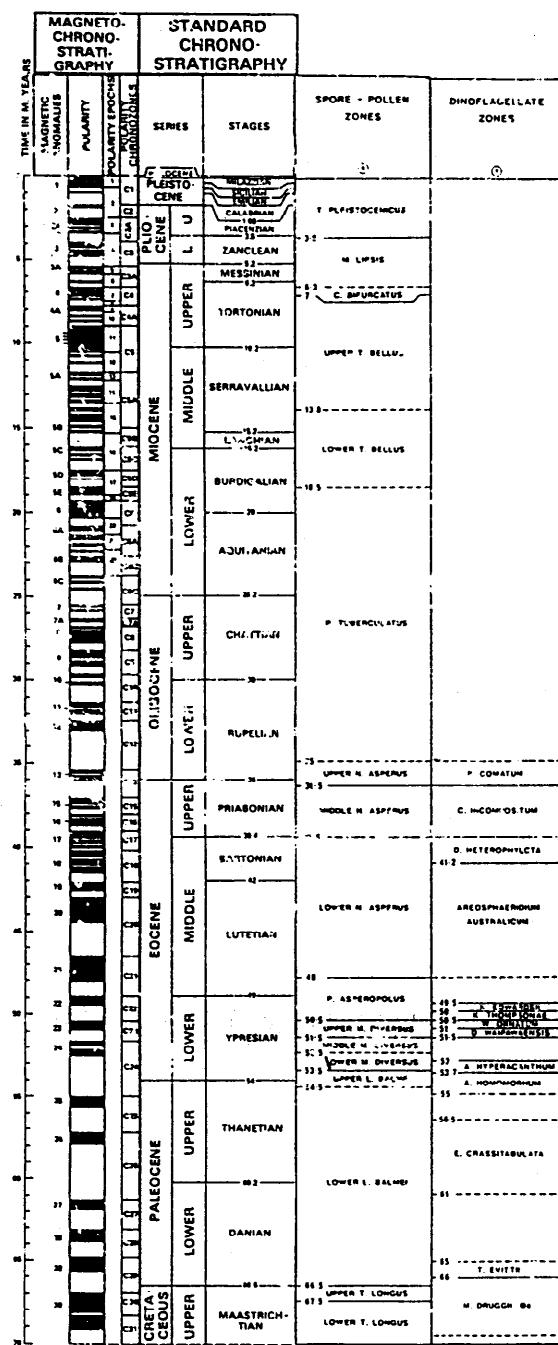


FIGURE 1 ZONAL FRAMEWORK

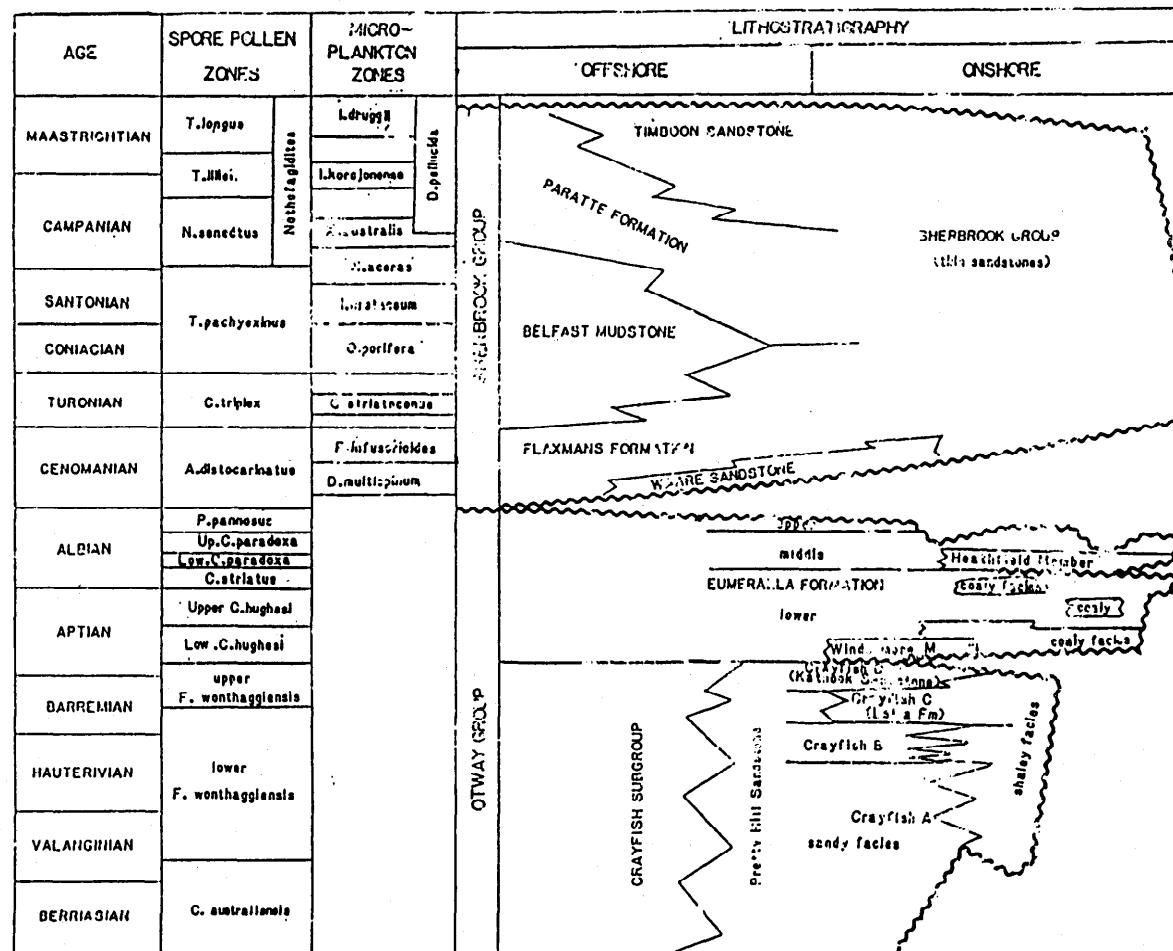


FIGURE 2 CRETACEOUS REGIONAL FRAMEWORK, OTWAY BASIN

III PALYNOSTRATIGRAPHY

A CODRINGTON-1

1 417.4m(cutts) : *asperus* Zone

Assignment to the *Nothofagidites asperus* Zone of Middle Eocene to earliest Oligocene age is indicated by the dominance of *Nothofagidites* spp (30%) without other markers. Yields are lean, typical of this part of the section. Frequent in a low diversity assemblage are *Cyathidites*, *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites* and *Halorugacardites harrisii*.

The common dinoflagellates include very common *Spiniferites ramosus* with frequent *Botryococcus* and *Micrhystridium*. Rare elements include *Lingulodinium machaerophorum*, *Glyptopyrocysta* and *Systmatophora*.

Equal quantities of marine derived dinoflagellates and terrestrially derived spores and pollen suggest intermediate marine environments. The lean yield suggests that a more offshore situation may be likely.

Colourless spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbon generation.

These features are consistent with the Niranda Group and certainly something younger than the Dilwyn Formation.

2 469.2m(cutts), 481.4m(cutts), 670m(cutts) : lean apparently middle *diversus* Zone with caved *asperus* Zone

Assignment to the *Proteacidites asperopolus* or older Zones is indicated by the downhole influx of common *H. harrisii* and youngest *Malvacipollis diversus*, *Proteacidites grandis*, *P. ornatus*, *P. tuberculiformis* and *Spinozonocolpites prominatus*. The presence of *P. tuberculiformis* and *Triporopollenites ambiguus* suggests the middle *Malvacipollis diversus* or younger zones, but these could be caved slightly. Thus assignment in the middle *diversus* to *asperopolus* Zones interval is indicated and the absence of any definitive upper *diversus* or *asperopolus* Zone markers (such as *Proteacidites pachypolus* or *P. asperopolus*) suggests the middle *diversus* Zone is most likely. This implies a sizeable hiatus at the Dilwyn/Niranda boundary, but this could be largely apparent if scarcity of zone taxa has caused them to be missed in this lean

yield. Overall, *H. harrisii* is common with *Cyathidites*, *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites* and *Proteacidites* frequent. Other rare but significant taxa include *Beupreadites verracosus*, *Cupaneidites orthoteichus*, *Intratriporopollenites notabilis* and *Proteacidites nasus*. Minor caving includes *Nothofagidites deminutus* and a single *Lygistepollenites holmei* at 670m is considered reworked.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, *Homotribium tasmaniense* at 469.2m suggests the lower *asperus* to upper *versus* Zones, and may be in place, or caved. Obviously caved are *Arenosphaeridium arcuatum* (lower *asperus* Zone) and *Impletosphaeridium sp* (Oligo-Miocene). Minor Cretaceous reworking includes *Circulodinium deflandrei*. Overall, the dinoflagellates are not age diagnostic. *Spiniferites* are common at 469.2 and 481.4m, but may be largely caved.

Environments are uncertain given the obvious caving. At 469.2 and 481.4m, environments appear to be intermediate to nearshore marine with very common dinoflagellates, but at 670m, non-marine lacustrine environments are suggested by the total absence of saline markers, and the presence of infrequent freshwater algae (*Botryococcus*).

Colourless to yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are typical of the Dilwyn and Pember units with the Pember/Dilwyn boundary usually falling in the middle *versus* Zone.

3 688.6m(cuts) : lower *versus* Zone

Assignment to the lower *Malvacipollis versus* Zone of Early Eocene age is indicated by *Malvacipollis versus* and *Periporopollenites demarcatus* without younger or older markers. *H. harrisii* is common with *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites*, *Gleicheniidites* and *Proteacidites* frequent. Rare elements include *Malvacipollis subtilis*, *P. grandis* and *Proteacidites incurvatus*.

Amongst the rare dinoflagellates, *Spiniferites* are frequent. The presence of *Deflandrea pachyceros* is consistent with the zonal assignment, as it is usually restricted to the lower and middle *versus* Zones.

M marginally marine environments are indicated by the dominant and diverse spores and pollen, rare low diversity dinoflagellates, and common freshwater algae (*Botryococcus*).

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the Pember Formation.

B EUMERALLA-1

1 767.8-770.8m(cutts) : apparently middle *diversus* Zone

Assignment to the middle *M. diversus* Zone of Early Eocene age is indicated by *Proteacidites kopiensis* and *P. ornatus* with younger or older markers. These elements could, however, be caved into the lower *diversus* Zone. The sample can be no younger than the *F. asperopolus* Zone on youngest *I. notabilis*, *P. grandis* and *P. ornatus*. The absence of even caved *P. pachypolus* and *P. asperopolus* at this level suggests a hiatus removing the upper *diversus* and *asperopolus* Zones. *P. pachypolus* occurs caved at 816.5m, but may originate in the *asperus* Zone. Common are *Nothofagidites* and *Proteacidites* with frequent *Cyathidites*, *Dilwynites* and *Falcisporites*. The high *Nothofagidites* content (including *N. deminutus* and *N. falcata*) suggests significant Nirranda Group caving. Rare but age significant are *C. orthoteichus*, *I. notabilis* and *P. nasus*. Obviously caved from the Miocene is *Acaciapollenites*.

Dinoflagellates are rare and include *D. pachyceros* (usually seen in the lower and middle *diversus* Zones), and *A. arcuatum* (considered caved with the other *asperus* Zone elements.). *Spiniferites* and *Microxystidium* are the most frequent.

M marginally marine environments are indicated by the rare low diversity dinoflagellates (some of which are clearly caved), and the dominant and diverse spores and pollen.

Colourless to yellow spores and pollen suggest immaturity for hydrocarbon generation.

These features are normally seen in the lower Dilwyn or upper Pember units, but clearly Nirranda Group caving has occurred.

2 813.5-816.6m(cutts) : apparently *senectus* Zone/*australis* Dinoflagellate Zone

Spores and pollen are not very age diagnostic, but include the Late Eocene to middle Eocene (*P. pachypodus*), Early Eocene *diversus* Zone (*M. diversus*, *C. orthoteichus*) and Paleocene *halmei* Zone to Campanian *senectus* Zone (*Gambierina edwardsii*). *Proteacidites*, *Cyathidites* and *Falcisporites* are common, with *Nothofagidites* and *Podosporites microsaccatus* frequent.

The dinoflagellates are mostly Cretaceous restricted forms, but are also mixed, including latest Paleocene-Oligocene *Apectodinium homomorphum*; Maastrichtian-Campanian *Isabelidinium pellucidum* and Campanian *Xentkoon australis* as well as long ranging Cretaceous taxa *Coronifera oceanica* and *Heiosphaeridium cf. laterobrachius*.

Assuming that the oldest elements are in place, a Campanian *senectus australis* Zone assignment is indicated. However, reworking into something younger cannot be excluded.

Marginal marine environments are indicated by the very rare low diversity dinoflagellates and the dominant and diverse pollen and spores.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

If the *australis* dinoflagellate Zone is in place, these features are normally seen in the Paaratte Formation.

C GREENSLOPES-1

1 390-400m(cutts) : *longus* Zone

Assignment to the *Tricolpites longus* Zone of Maastrichtian age is suggested by the zone restricted taxa *Quadraplanus brossius* and *Tricolpites longus*, but these could conceivably be caved slightly. Other diagnostically Cretaceous youngest occurrences include *Tricolporites lilliei* and *Triplopollenites sectilis*, but these range down into the *lilliei* Zone. *Proteacidites* are common with

Cyathidites, *Gambierina rudata*, *P. microsaccatus* and *Stereisporites antiquasporites* frequent. Rare elements include *L. helmet* and *P. incurvatus*. Inertinite and cuticle are common.

Amongst the dinoflagellates are *Alteria acutula* and *Manumiella druggii* suggesting the Maastrichtian *M. druggii* Dinoflagellate Zone, plus *Odontochitina spp* suggesting slightly older Campanian horizons in the *L. korojonense* Dinoflagellate Zone (correlative with the *Lille* Spore-Pollen Zone). These elements are considered reworked slightly, but could conceivably be in place with a *Lille korojonense* assignment indicated. It would make little difference to the lithostratigraphy.

Very nearshore marine environments are indicated by the very low dinoflagellate content and low to moderate diversity (some of which may be caved or reworked), and dominant and diverse pollen and spores.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the topmost Paaratte Formation.

2 450-60m(cutts) : *paradoxa* Zone

This assemblage is clearly mixed, but youngest and consistent *Coptospora paradoxa* and *Crybelosporites striatus* indicate the *C. paradoxa* Zone of mid Albian age. The absence of older markers (such as *Pilosporites notensis*, *Cyclosporites hughesi* and *Dictyosporites speciosus*) confirm the assignment. Younger elements are present and include *Amosopollis cruciformis*, *P. mawsonii*, *Stereisporites regnum* and *Gambierina rudata*, considered caved. Common taxa include *Cyathidites* and *Falcisporites* and frequent taxa include *M. antarcticus* and *P. microsaccatus*. Rare taxa include *Aequitriradites spinulosus*, *Balmeisporites holodictyus*, *Cicatricosporites australiensis*, *Foraminisporites wonthaggiensis* and *Triporoletes reticulatus*, consistent with the zonal assignment.

Dinoflagellates include caved Eocene (*Alisocysta ornatum* and *A. arcuatum*) and Late Cretaceous taxa (*Spinidinium balmeri*), as well as long ranging taxa considered caved from the Late Cretaceous.

Environments are probably non-marine or brackish on regional geological grounds, with the rare low diversity dinoflagellates considered all caved. Spores and pollen are dominant and diverse.

Yellow to light brown spore colours indicate immaturity approaching marginal maturity for oil but immaturity for gas/condensate.

These features are normally seen in the Eumeralla Formation, assuming that the *paradoxa* Zone is in place.

D KILLARA-1

- 1 444m(cutts) : apparently *longus* Zone with caved *balmei* Zone (Paleocene) and trace reworked *senectus* Zone (Campanian)

This assemblage is clearly mixed but the dominant elements support the *T. longus* Zone (*T. longus*, *T. sectilis*, *Tetracolporites verrucosus* plus the dinoflagellates), with some obvious caved Eocene (*N. falcata*, *P. pachypodus* plus dinoflagellates), and Paleocene (dinoflagellates). Common are *Falcisporites* and *Proteacidites* with frequent *Cyathidites*. Rare elements include *A. cruciformis*, *G. rudata*, *L. balmei*, *S. regium*, *T. longus* and *T. sectilis*.

Dinoflagellates are also clearly mixed with Eocene (*D. pachyceros*, *A. horromorphum*), Paleocene (*Pulvirostridinium pyrophorum* *D. speciosus*), Maastrichtian (*M. druggii*, *M. coronata*) and a single Campanian specimen (*X. australis*). It seems most likely that the Maastrichtian *longus* Zone is in place, but other options exist in these cuttings.

Nearshore marine environments are suggested by the low dinoflagellate content (34%) and moderate diversity, some of which is clearly caved. These environments may therefore be unreliable.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

If the *longus* Zone is in place, a Paaratte assignment is most likely.

E NAJABA-1

1 320m(cutts) : *asperopolus* (or upper *diversus*) Zone

Youngest *Myrtaceidites tenuis*, *M. diversus*, *P. grandis*, *P. ornatus*, and *S. prominatus* and dominant *H. harrisii* indicate the *P. asperopolus* or older zones. Frequent *P. pachypolus* and oldest *M. tenuis* (if in place and not caved) indicate the upper *diversus* or younger zones. Thus the interval upper *diversus* to *asperopolus* Zones is indicated. The absence of *P. asperopolus* suggest the upper *diversus* Zone is more likely, but *P. asperopolus* can be very rare. The dinoflagellates noted below favour the *asperopolus* Zone, but could be slightly caved. Overall, on species present, the *asperopolus* Zone is favoured.

Common are *H. harrisii* and *Proteacidites* with *Malvacipollis subtilis* and *P. pachypolus* frequent. Rare are *I. notabilis*, *M. diversus*, *P. nasus*, *P. ornatus* and *S. prominatus*.

Dinoflagellates present include *Kisselovia coleothrypta* with *Kisselovia thompsonae* caved into the sample below (400m), suggesting the lower part of the *P. asperopolus* Zone. Clearly caved is *A. arcuatum*, from the lower *asperus* Zone above.

Environments are apparently marginal marine, but the few dinoflagellates could be caved into non-marine lacustrine environments, given the common freshwater algae (*Botryococcus*). Pollen and spores are abundant and diverse. Yield was lean with cuticle common.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are usually seen in the Dilwyn Formation, not the Niranda Group.

2 400m(cutts) : upper *diversus* Zone

Dominant *H. harrisii* with oldest consistent *P. pachypolus* indicates the upper *M. diversus* Zone of Early Eocene age. *H. harrisii* is abundant (31%) with common *M. subtilis* and *Proteacidites*. Rare but significant elements include *C. orthoteichus*, *M. diversus*, *P. demarcatus*, *P. ornatus*, *P. tuberculiformis* and *S. prominatus*. Minor Niranda Group caving includes consistent *Nothofagidites dominatus*.

Dinoflagellates are extremely scarce and may all be caved.

Environments appear to be marginal marine, but could be non-marine lacustrine, given the high freshwater algal content (9% *Botryococcus*). Pollen and spores are abundant and diverse. Yield was lean with cuticle common.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the Dilwyn Formation.

3 690m(cutts), 785m(cutts) : upper or middle *diversus* Zones

Assignment to the *M. diversus* Zone is indicated by common *H. harrisi* with *L. notabilis*, *C. orthotrichus* and *S. prominatus*. At 690m, *P. tuberculiformis* suggests the middle *diversus* Zone while at 785m, *P. pachypolus* suggests the upper *diversus* Zone. If *P. pachypolus* is caved, the interval is entirely middle *diversus* Zone. If *P. pachypolus* is in place, the interval is entirely upper *diversus* Zone. In these cuttings, it is impossible to distinguish the possibilities, so the interval is lumped. Overall, *H. harrisi* is common, with *Falcisporites* and *Proteacidites* frequent.

Dinoflagellates are very scarce, not age diagnostic, and may be entirely caved.

Environments appear to be brackish, but all the dinoflagellates may be caved. Lacustrine conditions are likely, with very common to abundant *Botryococcus*, and abundant cuticle and amorphous organic matter (AOM). Pollen and spores are abundant and diverse.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the lower Dilwyn Formation and upper Pember Mudstone.

4 900m(cutts), 1100m(cutts) : middle *diversus* Zone

Oldest *P. tuberculiformis*, *P. ornatus* and *Triplopollenites ambiguus* indicate the middle *M. diversus* Zone of Early Eocene age. Common are *Dilwynites* and *H. harrisi*, with frequent *Falcisporites* and *Proteacidites*. Rare but useful

elements include *C. ortho'reichus*, *I. notabilis*, *M. diversus*, *P. kopiensis*, *P. nasus* and *S. prominatus*.

Amongst the very rare dinoflagellates, youngest *D. pachyceros* at 1100m is consistent with the zonal assignment. *A. arcuatum* is considered caved.

Environments appear brackish to marginal marine, but at least some dinoflagellates are caved. Lacustrine conditions are favoured by the common freshwater algae (*Botryococcus*). Pollen and spores are abundant and diverse.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the lower Dilwyn Formation and upper Pember Mudstone.

5 1400m(cutts) : lower *diversus* Zone

Assignment to the lower *M. diversus* Zone of Early Eocene age is indicated at the top by youngest *Cyathidites gigantis* and the absence of younger markers considered in place, and at the base on oldest *M. diversus* and *S. prominatus* without older markers. Very frequent are *Cyathidites* and *M. diversus* with frequent taxa including *Dilwynites*, *H. harrisii* and *Falcisporites*. Very rare *P. pachypolius* are considered caved. Morgan (1987) assigned swcs at 1311m and 1400m to the upper *diversus* Zone on oldest *P. pachypolius*. These specimens are now considered caved probably as mudcake on the swcs.

Dinoflagellates support the assignment with youngest *Hafniacphaera septata* and a downhole influx of *Muratodinium fimbriatum*. Other taxa include *A. homomorphum* and *D. pachyceros*.

Environments appear to be marginal marine with some of the rare dinoflagellates probably caved. Pollen and spores are dominant and diverse. Cuticle fragments are abundant. Lacustrine influence is major with very common freshwater algae (21% *Botryococcus*).

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the Pember Mudstone.

6 1460m(cutts) : lower *balmei* Zone

This lean assemblage is assigned to the lower *Lygistepollenites balmei* Zone on dinoflagellate evidence. Spores and pollen are too few to provide definitive age control. *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites*, *M. subtilis* and *Proteacidites* are frequent. A single *P. pachypolus* is considered caved. Morgan (1987) assigned swcs at 1405m and 1460.5m to the lower *balmei* Zone.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, *Deflandrea speciosus* and *Palaeoperidinium pyrophorum* indicate the lower *L. balmei* Zone. Elements considered caved include *A. homomorphum*, *D. pachyceros*, and *H. septata*. Two specimens of the Maastrichtian *M. druggii* were seen but are considered reworked.

Marginal marine environments are suggested by the low content of dinoflagellates (their moderate diversity is considered mostly due to caving) Freshwater algal acritarchs are frequent (*Paralecaniella* and *Botryococcus* both 5%). Pollen and spores are dominant and diverse.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the Pebble Point Formation.

F NORTH EUMERALLA-1

1 374.7-377.8m(cutts) : probably upper *versus* Zone with heavy *asperus* Zone caving.

This rich assemblage is unclear. The obvious dominance of *Nothofagidites* (43%) suggests the *asperus* Zone. Youngest *P. tuberculiformis* and *P. grandis* favour the *P. asperopolus* Zone or older, as does the scarcity of dinoflagellates. Youngest *P. ornatus* and *I. notabilis* also favour the *asperopolus* or older Zones, but do range into the basal lower *asperus* Zone. *Nothofagidites* dominate, with *Cyathiaites*, *Dilwynites*, *H. harrisii*, and *Tricolporites* frequent. On this data alone, either is possible.

Wilschut studied the palynology for the completion report and studied a swc from 1244ft (379.2m) which had very common *H. harrisii* (23%) and youngest *S. prominatus*, *P. grandis* and *M. diversus* indicating the *asperopolus* or older zones. He saw *P. pachypolus* down to 1771ft (539.8m), but *P. asperopolus*

has never been seen. This data indicates the upper *diversus* Zone and his data indicates the *asperus* Zone at 1172ft (357.2m).

Dinoflagellates are very scarce, and may be largely caved.

Environments appear to be marginal marine with extremely rare very low diversity dinoflagellates amongst the abundant and diverse pollen and spores.

Colourless to yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

Assignment to the topmost Dilwyn Formation seems most likely with heavy Nirranda Group caving. However, drillers depths on cuttings are notoriously unreliable at this scale and a log top Dilwyn at 382m may be within the scope of likely error.

2 767.8-770.8m(cutts) : indeterminate

This sample is almost barren and so is indeterminate. However, swc data from Wilschut at 2526ft (= 769.9m) suggests a lower *diversus* Zone assignment, consistent with the Pember Formation.

G PRETTY HILL-1

1 390.6-396.7m(cutts) : middle *diversus* Zone

Assignment to the middle *M. diversus* Zone is indicated by oldest *Banksieacidites elongatus*, *Proteacidites kopiensis*, *P. nasus* and *P. tuberculiformis* without younger markers, although these elements could conceivably be caved slightly. The samples could also be slightly younger if the key markers *P. asperopolus* and *P. pachy whole* have been missed due to their scarcity, rather than the stratigraphy. *Dilwynites* and *Fulcisorites* are common with *H. harrisii*, *M. diversus* and *Proteacidites* frequent. Rare but significant are *C. orthocheilus*, *I. notabilis*, *P. kopiensis*, *P. ornatus* and *P. tuberculiformis*.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, *D. pachyceros* is consistent as it usually occurs in the middle *diversus* to upper *balmei* Zones.

Environments are marginally marine to brackish as indicated by the dominant and diverse pollen and spores and very rare low diversity dinoflagellates, some of which may be caved. Significant lacustrine influence is evident, as freshwater algae are frequent (7% *Botryococcus*).

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the lower Dilwyn or upper Pember units, and not in the Niranda Group.

2 588-91m(cutts) : *balmei* Zone

Assignment to the *L. balmei* Zone of Paleocene age is indicated by youngest *L. balmei* without older markers. The yield was very lean and limits resolution. *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites* and *Proteacidites* are common, with *M. antarcticus* frequent. *L. balmei* and *Australopollis obscurus* are rare but multiple specimens indicate the zone. *Polycolpites esobalteus* is present but considered caved.

Dinoflagellates are extremely rare, not age diagnostic and may be caved.

Environments appear to be brackish with dominant and diverse pollen and spores and minor low diversity dinoflagellates. Spiny acritarchs are frequent (4%) and freshwater algae frequent (6% comprising *Paralecaniella* 2% and *Botryococcus* 3%).

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the Pebble Point Formation, or lower Pember Mudstone.

H SHAW-1

1 280m(cutts) : apparently *tuberculatus* Zone

Dominance of *Nothofagidites* with *Cyattheacidites annularis* suggests the *Proteacidites tuberculatus* Zone of Oligocene to Early Miocene age. However, this zone may exist higher in the well and be caving into the *asperius* Zone in this very lean assemblage. There is no evidence for the *asperopolitus* or

older zones, so the Nirranda Group is favoured. *Nothofagidites spp* are abundant with *N. brachyspinulosus* and *N. falcata* frequent. *H. harrisii* is common and *Falcisporites* frequent.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, *Spiniferites* are common with *Tectotodinium* frequent. *Pentadinium laticinctum* and *Impletosphaeridium sp* suggest an Oligocene age but may be caved.

Nearshore marine environments are suggested by the dinoflagellate content (26%) and moderate diversity, but much of this may be caved.

Colourless pollen and spores indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

2 325m(cutts) : lower *asperus* Zone (*heterophlycta* Dino Zone)

Assignment to the lower *N. asperus* Zone of Middle Eocene age is indicated by dominant *Nothofagidites* and the dinoflagellate data in a very lean assemblage. A single *C. annulatus* specimen is considered caved. *Nothofagidites* are abundant (44%) with *N. deminutus* and *N. falcata* frequent. Other frequent taxa include *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites* and *H. harrisii*. Rare but significant are *Milfordia hypolaenoides*, *Nothofagidites asperus* and *Proteacidites rectomarginus*.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, *Alisocysta ornatum* and *Deflandrea heterophlycta* indicate the *D. heterophlycta* Dinoflagellate Zone, correlative with the lower *N. asperus* Zone. *P. laticinctum* is considered caved from the Oligocene. *Spiniferites* are frequent with other elements rare.

Nearshore environments are indicated by the low dinoflagellate content (17%) and diversity, some of which may be caved. Pollen and spores are abundant and diverse.

Colourless spores indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

These features are normally seen in the Nirranda Group and not in the Dilwyn Formation.

IV CONCLUSIONS

Where the lithological criteria are equivocal, palynology has provided definitive clarification in most cases, despite the availability of only cuttings, especially for the top Dilwyn boundary.

One aspect is of concern. At the Nirranda/Dilwyn boundary several wells show a non descript *asperus* Zone above, and apparently middle *diversus* Zone below, implying a sizeable hiatus removing the *asperopolus* and upper *diversus* Zones. This may be real, but the same conclusion would be drawn if the zone markers (*P. asperopolus* and *P. pachypolus* *M. tenuis* respectively) were missed due to their extreme scarcity.

Two of the current wells suggest this may be so. First, in North Eumeralla-1, Wilschut (1974) records an interval 1244ft (379.2m)-1552ft (473.0m) without *P. pachypolus* (therefore apparently middle *diversus* Zone) above an interval 1636ft (498.7m)-1771ft (539.8m) with *P. pachypolus* and so clearly upper *diversus* Zone. Second, in Eumeralla-1, 767.8-770.8m(cutts) is assigned to the middle *diversus* Zone on the absence of *P. pachypolus*, which is present as caving in the late Cretaceous sample beneath (813.3-816.6m). In this case, however, *P. pachypolus* could be caved from the *asperus* Zone.

On the other hand, Najaba-1 shows an obvious upper *diversus* Zone showing frequent *P. pachypolus* (7%) with *M. tenuis*, and *P. pachypolus* caving downhole beneath this point. This suggests *P. pachypolus* can be consistent to frequent and therefore that its absence is real and indicates a hiatus.

Any geological feedback (seismic or detailed log correlation) on the validity and extent of a hiatus at the Nirranda/Dilwyn boundary would be useful to evaluate the palynology.

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SPECIES LOCATION INDEX

Index numbers are the columns in which species appear.

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20	CYATHEACIDITES ANNULATUS
21	CYATHIDITES GIGANTIS
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23	CYCADOPITES FOLLICULARIS
113	CYCLOPSIELLA VIETA
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115	DEFLANDREA HETEROPHYCTA
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117	DEFLANDREA SPECIOSUS
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160	POLYSPHAERIDIUM PSEUDOCOLLIGERUM
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66	PROTEACIDITES CLARUS
67	PROTEACIDITES CRASSUS
68	PROTEACIDITES GRANDIS
69	PROTEACIDITES INCURVATUS
70	PROTEACIDITES KOPIENSIS
71	PROTEACIDITES NASUS
72	PROTEACIDITES ORNATUS
73	PROTEACIDITES PACHYPOLUS
74	PROTEACIDITES PALISADUS
75	PROTEACIDITES RECTOMARGINIS
76	PROTEACIDITES SCBORATUS
77	PROTEACIDITES SP
78	PROTEACIDITES TUBERCULIFORMIS
79	QUADRPLANUS BROSSUS
80	RETITRILETES AUSTROCLAVATIDITES
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84	STEREISPORITES REGIUM
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167	TECTATODINIUM spp
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95	TRIPOROPOLLENITES SECTILIS
171	TRITHYRODINIUM EVITTII
172	TRITHYRODINIUM GLABRA
173	TRITHYRODINIUM spp
174	TURBOSPHAERA GALATEA
175	TURNOOSPHEERA SP
96	VERRUCOSISPORITES KOPKUENSIS
97	VITREISPORITES PALLIDUS
176	XENKROON AUSTRALIS

BOTRYOCCUS

CODRINGTON-1	.	CODRINGTON-1
0417.4 CUTTS	4	0417.4 CUTTS
0469.2 CUTTS	11	0469.2 CUTTS
0481.4 CUTTS	4	0481.4 CUTTS
0663.9-70 CUT	5	0663.9-70 CUT
0688.6 CUTTS	14	0688.6 CUTTS
EUMERALLA-1	.	EUMERALLA-1
0767.8-770.8C	5	0767.8-770.8C
0813.5-816.6C	4	0813.5-816.6C
GREENSLOPES-1	.	GREENSLOPES-1
0390-400 CUTT	5	0390-400 CUTT
0450-60 CUTTS	X	0450-60 CUTTS
KILLARA-1	.	KILLARA-1
0444 CUTTS	1	0444 CUTTS
NAJABA-1A	.	NAJABA-1A
0320 CUTTS	13	0320 CUTTS
0400 CUTTS	9	0400 CUTTS
0690 CUTTS	24	0690 CUTTS
0785 CUTTS	36	0785 CUTTS
0900 CUTTS	14	0900 CUTTS
1100 CUTTS	12	1100 CUTTS
1400 CUTTS	21	1400 CUTTS
1460 CUTTS	5	1460 CUTTS
NTH EUMERALLA	.	NTH EUMERALLA
0374.7-377.8C	4	0374.7-377.8C
0767.8-0770.8	X	0767.8-0770.8
PRETTY HILL-1	.	PRETTY HILL-1
0390.6-396.7C	7	0390.6-396.7C
0588-91 CUTTS	3	0588-91 CUTTS
SHAW-1	.	SHAW-1
0280 CUTTS	1	0280 CUTTS
0325 CUTTS	1	0325 CUTTS

CODRINGTON-1		155	OPERCULOGIUM CENTROCHERUM
0417.4 CUTTS	3	156	PHLEOGERIDINUM PYROPHORUM
0469.2 CUTTS	2	157	PHLEUSTOMOCYSTIS RETICULATA
0481.4 CUTTS	2	158	PHRHECANTELLA INDENTATA
0663.9-70 CUT	.	159	PENTHOINUM LATINCINCTUM
0688.6 CUTTS	X	160	POLYSPHAERIDIUM PSEUDOCOLLIGERUM
EUMERALLA-1	.	161	SHALANGIA SPP.
0767.8-770.8C	.	162	SPINIDIUMINIUM
0813.5-816.6C	.	163	SPINIDIUMINIUM BALMÉI
GREENSLOPES-1	.	164	SPINIFERITES RAMOSUS
0390-400 CUTT	.	165	SYSTEMATOPHYLLA PLACCHINTHA
0450-60 CUTTS	.	166	THYLOSphaERIDIUM SHALPINI
KILLARA-1	.	167	TECTATODINIUM SPP.
0444 CUTTS	1	168	THALASSIPHORA FELFGICH
NAJABA-1A	.	169	TRICHODINIUM CF. INTERMEDIUM
0320 CUTTS	1	170	TRICHODINIUM SP.
0400 CUTTS	.	171	TRITHYRIDIUM EVITTI
0690 CUTTS	.	172	TRITHYRIDIUM GLABRA
0785 CUTTS	X	173	TRITHYRIDIUM SP.
0900 CUTTS	.	174	TURBOSPHERA GALATEA
1100 CUTTS	.	175	TURBOSPHERA SP.
1400 CUTTS	1	176	XENIKON AUSTRALIS
1460 CUTTS	.		
NTH EUMERALLA	.		
0374.7-377.8C	.		
0767.8-0770.8	.		
PRETTY HILL-1	.		
0390.6-396.7C	.		
0588-91 CUTTS	.		
SHAW-1	.		
0280 CUTTS	3		
0325 CUTTS	1		

HYSTRICHOSPHAERIDIUM TUGIFERUM			
17.4 CUTTS	X	.	
169.2 CUTTS	1	.	
181.4 CUTTS	.	.	
163.9-70 CUT	.	.	
188.6 CUTTS	.	.	
EMERALLA-1	.	.	
167.8-770.8C	.	.	
13.5-816.6C	.	.	
MEENSLOPES-1	.	.	
190-400 CUTT	.	.	
50-60 CUTTS	.	.	
LLARA-1	.	.	
44 CUTTS	.	.	
JABA-1A	.	.	
120 CUTTS	.	.	
100 CUTTS	.	.	
190 CUTTS	.	.	
185 CUTTS	.	.	
100 CUTTS	.	.	
100 CUTTS	.	.	
100 CUTTS	.	.	
60 CUTTS	X	.	
H EMERALLA	.	.	
174.7-377.8C	.	.	
167.8-0770.8	.	.	
ETTY HILL-1	.	.	
190.6-396.7C	.	.	
188-91 CUTTS	.	.	
IAW-1	.	.	
80 CUTTS	.	.	
25 CUTTS	.	X	.
133			
134			
135			
136			
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		CORYNOBLASTICUM INQUIS.
0417.4 CUTTS	X	111 CORONIFERUM UCERNICH
0469.2 CUTTS		112 CYCLOPSIELLA VIETTA
0481.4 CUTTS	X	113 CYMATIOSPHAERA
0663.9-70 CUT		114 DEFLANDREA HETEKOPHYCTA
0688.6 CUTTS		115 DEFLANDREA PACHYCEROS ssp. b.
EUMERALLA-1		116 DEFLANDREA SPECIOSUS
1767.8-770.8C	X	117 ECFUNICULUM TRUNCULUM
0813.5-816.6C	X	118 DYPHES COLLIGERUM
GREENSWOODS-1		119 ECLOUDOPHYXIS PENICULATA
0390-400 CUTT		120 FIBROCYSTIS BIPOLARE
0450-60 CUTTS		121 FIBROCYSTIS SP
KILLARA-1		122 FIBROCYSTIS SP
0444 CUTTS		123 GLYPHYROCYSTA DIVARICATUM
NAJABA-1A		124 GLYPHYROCYSTA RETINENTIA
0320 CUTTS		125 HHFNIAISPHERA SEPTATA
1400 CUTTS		126 HHFNIAISPHERA SP
0690 CUTTS		127 HEMICYSTODIUM ZOHHRYI
0785 CUTTS		128 HETEROSPHERIDIUM SP
0900 CUTTS	X	129 HETEROOSPHERIDIUM CF LAEROBRACHII
1100 CUTTS	X	130 HOMOTRYBLIUM THSIHNIENSE
1400 CUTTS	X	131 HYSTRICHOKOLPOMA EISENICKII
1460 CUTTS		132 HYSTRICHOKOLPOMA FIGAUDAE
NTH EUMERALLA		
0374.7-377.8C		
0767.8-0770.8		
PRETTY HILL-1		
0390.6-396.7C		
0588-91 CUTTS		
SHAW-1		
1280 CUTTS		
0325 CUTTS		

		6.7	PROTEACIOTITES URHOSEUS.
		6.8	PROTEACIOTITES GRANDIS.
		6.9	PROTEACIOTITES INCURVATUS.
		7.0	PROTEACIOTITES KOPIENSIS.
		7.1	PROTEACIOTITES NASUS.
		7.2	PROTEACIOTITES ORNATUS.
		7.3	PROTEACIOTITES PHICHYPOLEUS.
		7.4	PROTEACIOTITES PHILIPINUS.
		7.5	PROTEACIOTITES RECOTHARGINIS.
		7.6	PROTEACIOTITES SCHEBKHTUS.
		7.7	PROTEACIOTITES SP.
		7.8	PROTEACIOTITES TUBERCULIFORMIS.
		7.9	QUADRIFLORUS BROSSUS.
		8.0	PETITIFLORITES PRIMINATUS.
		8.1	SPINIZONOCOLPITES PRIMINATUS.
		8.2	STEREISPORITES TRIFUNCTISPORITES, FUN.
		8.3	STEREISPORITES HANTHOSPORITES.
		8.4	STEREISPORITES REGNUM.
		8.5	TETRACOLPITES UERRUCOSUS.
		8.6	TRICOLPITES.
		8.7	TRICOLPITES GILLII.
		8.8	TRICOLPITES LONGUS.
CODRINGTON-1			
0417.4 CUTTS	.	.	
0469.2 CUTTS	.	X	
0481.4 CUTTS	.	1	X
0663.9-70 CUT	.	1	X
0688.6 CUTTS	.	X	
EUMERALLA-1			
0767.8-770.8C	.	1	X
0813.5-816.6C	.	.	
GREENSLOPES-1			
0390-400 CUTT	.	1	
0450-60 CUTTS	.	.	
KILLARA-1			
0444 CUTTS	1	.	
NAJABA-1A			
0320 CUTTS	.	X	
0400 CUTTS	.	1	X
0690 CUTTS	.	X	X
0785 CUTTS	.	1	X
0900 CUTTS	.	1	X
1100 CUTTS	.	X	X
1400 CUTTS	.	X	X
1460 CUTTS	.	X	X
NTH EUMERALLA			
0374.7-377.8C	X	X	
0767.8-0770.8	.	.	
PRETTY HILL-1	.	.	
0390.6-396.7C	X	X	
0588-91 CUTTS	.	X	
SHAW-1	.	.	
0280 CUTTS	.	1	.
0325 CUTTS	.	1	.

MICROFLINTON CONTENT												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CODRINGTON-1												
0417.4 CUTTS	37	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
0469.2 CUTTS	40	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
0481.4 CUTTS	33	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
0663.9-70 CUT	0	.	.	1	2	.	.	.	X	.	.	.
0688.6 CUTTS	.5	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.
EUMERALLA-1												
0767.8-770.8C	.9	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
0813.5-816.6C	.3	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	X	X	.	X
GREENSLOPES-1												
0390-400 CUTT	.8	.	1	2	2	.	.	.	1	.	1	.
0450-60 CUTTS	.5	.	X	X	2	.	X	.	1	X	1	.
KILLARA-1										X	3	X
0444 CUTTS	34	.	.	1	.	1	.	.	X	.	.	.
WAJABA-1A										.	.	.
0320 CUTTS	.1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
0400 CUTTS	.1	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	X	.	.	.
0690 CUTTS	.1	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	X	.	.
0785 CUTTS	.1	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
0900 CUTTS	.9	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.	.	.
1100 CUTTS	.5	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	.
1400 CUTTS	12	.	.	.	7	.	.	.	1	X	1	.
1460 CUTTS	25	.	3	3	3	.	.	.	1	.	.	.
NTH EUMERALLA												
0374.7-377.8C	.2	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.
0767.8-0770.8	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X
PRETTY HILL-1												
0390.6-396.7C	.2	.	.	2	1	.	.	X	.	1	2	.
0588-91 CUTTS	.4	.	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	3	1	.
SHAW-1										3	.	.
0280 CUTTS	26	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	X
0325 CUTTS	17	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	X