

DEPARTMENT OF MINES
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
ENGINEERING DIVISION

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS
TARCOOLA - ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY
REPORT ON SUPPLEMENTARY GROUNDWATER
BORING, N.T. BORDER - ALICE SPRINGS

Progress Report No. 9.

by

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Geologist

Engineering Services Section

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Rept.Bk.No. 77/12
G.S. No. 5841
Eng. No. 76-66
D.M. No. 329/75
Pt. II.

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Dwg. No.
77-51

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SUMMARY

Six water bores were put down to a cumulative depth of 424 m between the N.T. border and Alice Springs, at sites nominated by the N.T. Water Resources Branch. Successful wells were completed at C58, C177 and C189 km, and preliminary indicated yields vary between 900 and 3000 g.p.h. (1.1 to 3.8 l/sec). Salinity is in the range 1000 - 20 000 mg/l.

INTRODUCTION

Following a request, dated 6th September 1976, from the Water Resources Branch of the Dept of Northern Australia (acting on behalf of Australian National Railways) 6 groundwater bores were drilled between the Northern Territory border and Alice Springs, along the proposed alignment of the Tarcoola-Alice Springs Railway. This will constitute the fourth, and final, tender section of the railway, between about 562 and 830 km north from Tarcoola (C0 km - C270 km).

This drilling supplements work carried out earlier by the Water Resources Branch (W.R.B.). In the present program sites were selected by Mr. R.E. Read of the W.R.B., and drilled by the S.A. Mines Department. Drilling commenced on November 9, 1976 and was completed on December 9; a rotary and a cable tool rig were employed. Of the 6 holes, three (C58, C177 and C189)

were completed as production wells, and the rest were abandoned and backfilled.

Successful wells were airlifted to establish approximate yield, and pump testing is to be carried out at a later date by the W.R.B. Well salinity was estimated using a portable conductivity meter, and samples submitted to the W.R.B. for full analysis.

A Summary of Well Data is presented in Table I.

Table I

SUMMARY OF WELL DATA

<u>Bore No.</u>	<u>Depth (m)</u>	<u>Airlifted Yield(gph)</u>	<u>Approx. Salinity</u>	<u>Drilling Method</u>	<u>Status</u>
C58	124	900	19500	DHH	PW
C125	11	-	15000	CT	AB
C145	120	50	-	CT, DHH	AB
C160	20	dry	-	DHH	AB
C177	81	3000	1670	DHH	PW
C189	68	1500	1080	DHH	PW

Abbreviations

DHH Downhole Hammer (rotary)
 CT Cable Tool
 PW Production Well (hole cased and developed)
 AB Hole abandoned and backfilled due to poor yield or high salinity.

NOTE

- (1) Yield based on airlifting only, and is not necessarily the recommended pumping rate, which may be higher or lower depending on the results of future pump testing.
- (2) Salinity is approximately only, based on field conductivity tests. All production wells have been sampled for laboratory analysis.

DRILLING METHODS

Both cable tool and rotary techniques were used, the latter with rather more success. The rotary rig was a truck-mounted Mayhew 1000 equipped with a Megadrill Direct Mining (or "downhole") hammer. Air was supplied to the hammer at 700 c.f.m. and 250 p.s.i. by a Holman Compressor. A Ruston 22W Cable tool rig was used to supplement the rotary plant, and for boring in unconsolidated materials which could jam or bury the downhole hammer.

C58

Borehole C58 was originally rotary drilled to 68 m, but had to be abandoned after a tricone bit fragmented at the base of the hole. The rig was shifted about 6 m and the hole redrilled successfully to 124 m.

C125

This hole was put down by a cabletool rig on the north bank of the Finke River. Intended as a source of concrete water, the bore was abandoned at 11 m after groundwater was found to be saline (measured as 15 000 mg/l on a field conductivity meter).

C145

Located a few metres south of the Idracowra/Palmer Valley boundary fence, C145 was initially drilled to 96 m by the cable tool plant, then extended to 120 m by rotary. On airlifting the yield was found to be very poor - about 50 g.p.h. of thin mud - so the hole was abandoned.

C160

C160 was rotary drilled to 20 m, and discontinued after repeated caving by loose dry sand threatened to bury the down-hole hammer. It is possible that this site could be productive at depth, but for any further drilling a cable-tool rig is recommended.

C177

Borehole C177 is located about 9 km south of the Hugh River, and was rotary drilled in the Jay Creek Limestone - here dominantly a shaley unit. About 5000 g.p.h. of fair camp-quality water was airlifted, and the hole completed as a production well.

C189

C189 is similar to C177 in quality, though somewhat less productive (1500 g.p.h. airlifted). It was rotary drilled to 68 m, and completed as a production well.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Bernd Weber of the N.T. Mines Branch and Bob Read of the Water Resources Branch for assistance in the field during this drilling program. The drilling was carried out by Senior Drillers W.J. Boyd (rotary) and L.A. Hausler (Cable tool), and particular thanks are due to them and their crews for their efficient work in trying summer conditions.



G.H. McNally
GEOLOGIST

APPENDIX - BORE LOGS

PROJECT: TARCOOLA-ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY		DEPARTMENT OF MINES — SOUTH AUSTRALIA ENGINEERING DIVISION		HOLE NO. C58	
LOCATION OR CO-ORDS:		EL Surface		UNIT/STATE NO:	
SEC.		HD.		SERIAL NO:	
		EL ref. point		FOLDER NO.	
Datum					
DEPTH TO WATER CUT (m)		DEPTH TO STANDING WATER (m)		SUPPLY	
				*m ³ /day	
				Method of test	
90-124		27.3		900 g.p.h. (1.1 l/sec)	
				airlifted 1 hour	
				19 500 (approx.)	
				tested on site	
HOLE Dia.		DEPTH m		CORE	
GRAPHIC LOG		DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	
from		to		UNIT	
				AGE	
				CASING	
				WATERS CUT	
				WATER LEVEL	
5		0 2		Orange-brown slightly silty medium/fine SAND.	
10		2 6		Dark pink to light brown silty m.f. SAND with a little coarse sand and up to 20% of cemented sand fragments (silcrete) and white calcrete nodules.	
15		6 100		Dark red-brown, with spots and streaks of grey-green, very stiff to hard fine sandy fissured CLAY (or clay-shale). Grades downwards into SHALE, with some siltstone present. Abundant fine biotite mica present.	
REMARKS		*NOTE: 1000 gals./hr. = 110 m ³ /day		DRILL TYPE DHH	
Located about 100 m E of C58 km peg.		Completed productive.		LOGGED BY GHMcn	
				CIRCULATION: Air	
				DATE: 30.11.76	
				START: 23.11.76	
				TRACED BY:	
				FINISH: 30.11.76	
				DATE:	
				SHEET.... 1 OF .. 6	

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to	GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
15			6 100	Dark red-brown CLAY and SHALE, as above.					
20									
25									
30									
35									
40									

Horseshoe Bend Shale

SHEET...2... OF...6...

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to	GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
40			6 100	Dark red-brown CLAY and SHALE, as above.					
45									
50									
55									
60									
65									

Horseshoe Bend Shale

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
65			6	100	Dark red-brown CLAY and SHALE, as above.					
70										
75										
80					78-80 m Purple and white shale.					
85										
90										

Horseshoe Bend Shale

150 mm I.D. welded

SHEET... 4... OF... 6...

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
90			6	100	Dark red-brown CLAY and SHALE, as above.					
95										
100			100	111	Fine sandy SHALE, as above, but fresher, stronger and dominantly grey-green rather than red-brown. Some siltstone and a few chips of orange fine sandstone.					
105										
110										
115			111	124	Light red-brown with white specks medium SANDSTONE. Sand is 75% quartz, 25% felspar. About 10% of chips are dark red-brown and grey siltstone (from above?).					

Horseshoe Bend Shale

Palaeozoic

Langra Fm.

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET[illegible]

PROJECT: TARCOOLA-ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY							DEPARTMENT OF MINES — SOUTH AUSTRALIA ENGINEERING DIVISION						HOLE NO. C125			
LOCATION OR CO-ORDS:													UNIT/STATE NO:			
							EL Surface						SERIAL NO:			
SEC. HD.							EL ref. point Datum						FOLDER NO.			
DEPTH TO WATER CUT (m)		DEPTH TO STANDING WATER (m)		SUPPLY				TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS								
				*m ³ /day		Method of test		milligrammes/litre			Analysis W. NO.					
7.0		5.0				not tested		about 15 000			tested on site					
HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to	GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE								UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			0 11	Light red-brown silty medium and fine quartz SAND with a little gravel. Coarse gravel (cobbles?) 7-8 m.												
				END OF HOLE, 11.0 m												
				REMARKS Located about 120 m NE of C125 km peg, north bank of Finke River. Abandoned and backfilled due to saline water.								DRILL TYPE C.T.		LOGGED BY: GHMcN		
												CIRCULATION:		DATE: 17.11.76		
												START: 9.11.76		TRACED BY:		
												FINISH: 11.11.76		DATE:		
												SHEET... 1 OF 1				

PROJECT: TARCOOLA-ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY		DEPARTMENT OF MINES — SOUTH AUSTRALIA ENGINEERING DIVISION		HOLE NO. C145	
LOCATION OR CO-ORDS:		EL Surface		UNIT/STATE NO:	
SEC.		HD.		SERIAL NO:	
		EL ref. point		FOLDER NO.	
Datum					
DEPTH TO WATER CUT (m)		DEPTH TO STANDING WATER (m)		SUPPLY	
				TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS	
				milligrammes/litre	
				Analysis W. NO.	
64		39.0		approx. 50 g.p.h.	
				airlifted	
				not tested	
HOLE Dia. DEPTH m		CORE		GRAPHIC LOG	
DEPTH (m) from to		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE		UNIT AGE CASING WATERS CUT WATER LEVEL	
0 5		Light brown SAND and sandy CLAY, with fine silcrete and siltstone grit.		Tertiary?	
5 120		Red-brown stiff silty CLAY with traces of sand (weathered shale).		Proterozoic Pertatataka Formation	
15					
REMARKS		*NOTE: 1000 gals./hr. = 110 m ³ /day		DRILL TYPE	
Located about 100 m W of C145 km peg. Originally drilled to 96 m by cable tool, deepened to 120 m by rotary-percussion. Abandoned due to poor yield.				LOGGED BY GHMCN	
				CIRCULATION:	
				DATE:	
				START: 14.11.76	
				TRACED BY:	
				FINISH: 7.12.76	
				DATE:	
				SHEET. 1 OF 6	

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to	GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
15			5	120	Red-brown silty CLAY, as above.				
20									
25									
30									
35									
40									

Pertatataka Fm.

SHEET...2... OF 6...

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
40			5	120	Red-brown silty CLAY, as above.					
45										
50										
55					53m. Intact bailer sample of moist red-brown to brown mottled clay, with about 3% ironstone grit (to 3 mm). The clay is stiff and easily bored.					
60										
65										

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

PROJECT:

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to	GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
65			5 120	Red-brown silty CLAY, as above.					
70									
75									
80				80-90 m (approx.) about 30% shale fragments mixed with silt/clay sludge.					
85									
90									

PROJECT:

BORE LOG
CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m		CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE		UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL	
from		to											
90				5	120	Red-brown silty CLAY, as above.							
95													
100													
105													
110													
115													

SHEET. 5 OF 6

Pertatataka Fm.

PROJECT:

BORE LOG


CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
115			5	120	Red-brown silty CLAY, as above.	Pertatata Fm.				
120					END OF HOLE, 120.0 m					

PROJECT: TARCOOLA-ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY		DEPARTMENT OF MINES — SOUTH AUSTRALIA ENGINEERING DIVISION		HOLE NO. C160					
LOCATION OR CO-ORDS:		EL Surface		UNIT/STATE NO:					
SEC.		HD.		SERIAL NO:					
		EL ref. point		FOLDER NO.					
Datum									
DEPTH TO WATER CUT (m)		DEPTH TO STANDING WATER (m)		SUPPLY		TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS			
				*m ³ /day		milligrammes/litre			
				Method of test		Analysis W. NO.			
dry									
HOLE Dia. DEPTH m CORE		GRAPHIC LOG		DEPTH (m) from to		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE		UNIT AGE CASING WATERS CUT WATER LEVEL	
5		0 2		Bright orange silty m.f. quartz SAND, weakly cemented in places.		Recent			
		2 4		Light pinkish brown c.m.f. quartz SAND, weakly cemented in places.					
		4 8		Light dirty yellow clear m.f. SAND with 3% of angular sandstone chips.		Tertiary?			
10		8 10		As 4-8 m, with 10-15% dry grey clay fragments (clay apparently present as partings, not as matrix).					
		10 12		As 8-10 m, slightly pinkish, clay 5%.					
		12 14		Light brown silty m.f. quartz SAND with 10% sandstone chips.					
15		14 16		Light pinkish brown loose clean m.f. SAND with 5-10% clay pellets.					
REMARKS		*NOTE: 1000 gals./hr. = 110 m ³ /day				DRILL TYPE DHH		LOGGED BY GHMcN	
Located about 60 m E of C160 km peg. Abandoned and backfilled due to caving of loose sand at 20 m.						CIRCULATION: Air		DATE: 6.12.76	
						START: 4.12.76		TRACED BY:	
						FINISH: 4.12.76		DATE:	
						SHEET... 1		OF .. 2	

PROJECT:

BORE LOG
CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
15			14 16	16 20	Light brown clean SAND, as above. Very loose, light dirty yellow c.m.f. quartz SAND. No fines, no rock fragments. NO SAMPLE TAKEN, 18-20 m.					
20			END OF HOLE, 20.0 m							

PROJECT: TARCOOLA-ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY										DEPARTMENT OF MINES — SOUTH AUSTRALIA ENGINEERING DIVISION										HOLE NO. C177									
LOCATION OR CO-ORDS:										BORE LOG										UNIT/STATE NO:									
SEC. HD.										EL Surface EL ref. point Datum										SERIAL NO:									
																				FOLDER NO.									
DEPTH TO WATER CUT (m)				DEPTH TO STANDING WATER (m)				SUPPLY *m ³ /day Method of test				TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS milligrammes/litre Analysis W. NO.																	
				42.1 m				3 000 g.p.h. (3.8 l/sec)				Airlifted, 1 hour				approx. 1 670				tested on site									
HOLE Dia. DEPTH m		CORE		GRAPHIC LOG		DEPTH (m) from to		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE										UNIT		AGE		CASING		WATERS CUT		WATER LEVEL			
5				H		0 1 1 81		Red-brown SILT soil. Light grey, light grey-green and dark red-brown calcareous SHALE with bands of muddy limestone. 1-4 m, mostly light grey limestone. 4-6 m, red-brown shale. 6-7 m, white limestone. 7-10 m, dark red-brown shale. 10-12 m, white limestone and red-brown shale 12-14 m, mostly purple-brown shale. 14-18 m, mostly white/light grey limestone.										Jay Creek Limestone Cambrian		150 mm I.D. welded casing, G.L. - 11.2m									
10				H																									
15				H																									
REMARKS										*NOTE: 1000 gals./hr. = 110 m ³ /day Located about 100 m W of C177 km peg. Completed productive.										DRILL TYPE DHH		LOGGED BY GHMcN							
																				CIRCULATION: Air		DATE: 4.12.76							
																				START: 2.12.76		TRACED BY:							
																				FINISH: 4.12.76		DATE:							
																				SHEET 1		OF 4							

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
15			1	81	Calcareous SHALE with limestone bands, as above. 14-18 m, mostly white/light grey limestone. 18-20 m, dark red-brown shale, non-calcareous. 20-22 m, white/light grey/red-brown shale 22-24 m, dark red-brown shale. 24-26 m, white/light grey/red-brown shale. 26-28 m, mostly white to light grey shale, slightly calcareous. 28-32 m, mostly red-brown, with minor white shale. 32-37 m, as above, light grey shale predominant. 37-40 m, purplish red-brown shale.					
20										
25										
30										
35										
40										

Jay Creek Limestone

SHEET...2... OF 4...

Jay Creek Limestone

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to	GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
40			1 81	Calcareous SHALE with limestone bands, as above 40-42 m, light grey, white, dark red-brown shale 42-50 m, dark purple-brown shale, slightly to non-calcareous					
45									
50				50-56 m, mostly purple-brown as above, with 10% white shale fragments.					
55				56-58 m, white, pink and light grey calcareous shale					
				58-60 m, dark purple shale					
60				60-64 m, dark purplish red-brown shale with 10% light grey.					
65									

Jay Creek Limestone

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
65			1	81	Calcareous SHALE with limestone bands, as above. 64-74 m, dark red-brown shale.					
70										
75					74-78 m, dark purple, white and grey shale, with large fragments of white limestone (to 60 m)					
80					78-80 m, dark purple shale					
					80-81 m, large fragments (60 mm) of light grey and off-white limestone with shale laminae. Porous (5-10%).					
					END OF HOLE, 81.0 m					

PROJECT: TARCOOLA-ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY					DEPARTMENT OF MINES — SOUTH AUSTRALIA ENGINEERING DIVISION					HOLE NO. C189				
LOCATION OR CO-ORDS:										UNIT/STATE NO:				
SEC. HD. EL Surface EL ref. point Datum										SERIAL NO:				
										FOLDER NO.				
DEPTH TO WATER CUT (m)		DEPTH TO STANDING WATER (m)		SUPPLY			TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS							
				*m ³ /day		Method of test		milligrammes/litre		Analysis W. NO.				
26-52		16.6		1 500 g.p.h. (1.9 l/sec)		airlifted, 1 hour		approx. 1 080		tested on site				
HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE					UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
<div>51 10 15</div> <div>0 : 1.8 1.8 : 13</div> <div>13 : 33</div> <div>Bright orange medium/fine SAND, slightly silty. Yellowish white weathered fine SANDSTONE. Sample consists of very silty fine sand with 5% of fine sandstone chips.</div> <div>Weathered SANDSTONE as above, proportion of rock chips increasing to 10-20%. Light grey colour.</div> <div>Silurian (?) - Devonian Mereenie Sandstone 150mm O.D. threaded casing, G.L. - 12.75m</div> <div>Drift Recent</div>														
REMARKS Located 100 m E of C189.2 km. Completed productive.					*NOTE: 1000 gals./hr. = 110 m ³ /day					DRILL TYPE DHH LOGGED BY: GMNcn				
					CIRCULATION: Air					DATE: 9.12.76				
					START: 8.12.76					TRACED BY:				
					FINISH: 9.12.76					DATE:				
SHEET... 1										OF... 4				

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia. DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m)		GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
			from	to						
15			13	33	Light grey weathered fine SANDSTONE, as above. Becoming slightly moist below 20 m.					
20										
25										
30										
33			33	46	Orange and light grey fine SANDSTONE, as above (orange colour may be due to washing down from 0-2 m).					
35										
40										

Mereenie Sandstone

PROJECT:

BORE LOG

CONTINUATION SHEET

HOLE Dia DEPTH m	CORE	GRAPHIC LOG	DEPTH (m) from to	GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE	UNIT	AGE	CASING	WATERS CUT	WATER LEVEL
40			33 46	Orange and light grey fine SANDSTONE, as above.					
45			46 68	Mainly light grey, fine SANDSTONE. Fresh to slightly weathered. Chips 50% + of sample, light to dark grey and dark purple-brown fine, quartz sandstone.					
50									
55									
60									
65									

Mereenie Sandstone

