

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND ENERGY  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Rept.Bk.No. 79/105

KOPPERAMANNA; GASON; PANDIE PANDIE  
1:250 000 SHEETS  
WATER WELL SURVEY

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

by

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and

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ENGINEERING DIVISION

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Eng.No. 77/66  
D.M.No. 1146/70,  
943/71,  
944/71

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ABSTRACT

A hydrological survey to update information on the 1:250 000 sheets - Kopperamanna, Gason and Pandie Pandie was carried out during April-May 1979. The above three sheets are incorporated into one report because of their topographic and hydrogeological similarities. Only 13 wells were located including 10 flowing wells which were photographed. Groundwater is used for stock and domestic purposes. The Tertiary-Quaternary aquifers which are mainly associated with drainage lines have quite variable salinities ranging<sub>3</sub> from 407 to 9953 mg/l and yields range from 16 to 216 m<sup>3</sup>/day. Standing water levels vary from 3 to 26 m below the surface.

The most important aquifer of the area is the Algebuckina Sandstone which is the main aquifer of the Great Artesian Basin. Its depth and water pressure increase in a northerly direction. Salinities range from 483 to 1059 mg/l with yields ranging from 1176 to 3279 m<sup>3</sup>/day. Well head temperatures range between 76°C to 98°C.

Recharge to Tertiary-Quaternary sediments is derived from local rainfall enhanced along drainage lines. The Algebuckina Formation receives most of its recharge from south-west Queensland and New South Wales. There are no foreseeable pollution problems in the area.

INTRODUCTION

A water well survey of the 1:250 000 sheets Kopperamanna, Gason and Pandie Pandie was carried out during April-May 1979. The main objective was to provide basic data on the hydrogeology of the area and to assist the Drilling Branch of this Department with rehabilitation programmes (see Appendix I). Six of the flowing wells located on these sheets are included in the TCWQ Statewide water quality network and were sampled for Heavy Metals, Standard Full Analysis and Extended Full Analysis. A water sample from the remaining flowing wells was collected for

Standard Full Analysis only.

The three sheets, in the northern pastoral region of the State lie between latitudes  $29^{\circ}$  and  $26^{\circ}$  and longitudes  $138^{\circ}$  and  $139^{\circ}30'$ , in order northwards: Kopperamanna, Gason and Pandie Pandie (Fig. 1). The Birdsville Track runs in a northerly direction through approximately the central portion of each sheet and provides the only access road either by Marree 80 km to the south, or Birdsville (Queensland) in the northeast. Pastoral stations include Etadunna, Mulka, Mungeranie, Clifton Hills, Pandie Pandie, Andrewilla, Kalamurina and Cowarie.

As the three sheets incorporated in this report are adjoining and are all located in the Great Artesian Basin, physical features and hydrogeology are comparable throughout the area.

## PHYSICAL FEATURES

### Topography

The region is divided into three broad zones:

1. The Simpson, Strzelecki and Tirari deserts which dominate the north, central west and much of the south, consisting of longitudinal sand dunes trending north-northwesterly with small lakes occurring in the interdunal corridors.
2. The Sturt Stony desert (Gason Dome) occupies the central portion and is a flat monotonous gibber plain with a few scattered mesas and buttes and longitudinal sand dunes.
3. The Warburton and Diamantina rivers and Cooper Creek form a network of channels and associated flood plains which follow a southwesterly course throughout the region.

### Climate

The region has an arid climate with hot summers and cold dry winters. There is no dominant seasonal rainfall pattern but higher rainfall generally occurs during the summer months (often

due to thunderstorm activity). Rainfall from selected stations are listed below:

STATION	AVERAGE (mm)	RANGE (mm)
Clifton Hills	149	10(1965)-608(1955)
Mulka	124	31(1940)-721(1974)
Muloorina	141	47(1967)-439(1975)

(see Figs. 2a, 2b, 2c).

Average day temperatures range from 20°C in winter to 35°C in summer (Marree temperature records).

### Vegetation

The severity of the climate reflects the sparseness of the vegetation which comprises canegrass and saltbush occurring on both the lower slopes of the dunes and gibber plains. Mulga, Gidgea and needlebush are found in the sandy deserts whilst the creeks and drainage channels are defined by lignum, saltbush, coolabah and various acacias. Ephemeral grasses and wild flowers bloom after heavy rainfall.

### Land Use

Land usage is confined to cattle grazing as the area is located north of the dog proof fence.

### SURFACE HYDROLOGY

The major drainage systems of this region, the Diamantina River and Cooper Creek, originate from areas of high relief in central and western Queensland. The Diamantina enters the area in the northeast and follows a southwesterly course into Goyder Lagoon, a large floodplain of braided channels and meanders. After exceptional rains the floodwaters of Goyder Lagoon (usually partially inundated every year) enter the more confined Warburton River system and flow on to Lake Eyre. Cooper Creek, with its associated floodplains enter the region in the central east and meanders along a southwesterly course eventually draining into Lake Eyre. Within these drainage systems there are numerous tributaries arising from localised areas of high

relief. All streams in this area are ephemeral. There are many water holes along the river during good rainfall years but in a drought they gradually dry up and become increasingly saline.

Numerous scattered swamps, salt lakes and claypans are found in interdunal corridors throughout the desert region.

## HYDROGEOLOGY

### Aquifers

Sediments of Tertiary-Quaternary age form the upper unconfined aquifer of the region. These mainly comprise alluvium, fine sands and gravels with sandy clays, feldspathic sandstone, occasional limestone beds and basal conglomerates. Many earlier wells were dug into this shallow aquifer along creeks where recharge after rains is of maximum benefit.

The Cretaceous, relatively impermeable sediments, provide a confining bed for the pressure water of the main aquifer of the basin. These are the Winton Formation, comprising pyritic claystones, fine grained sands, silts, clays and lignite; predominantly grey-green, little quartz and mostly feldspathic. (Wells within the area that have been drilled into this formation have been abandoned due to poor supply and excess salinity, making it a poor aquifer in this part of the basin). The Oodnadatta Formation consisting of a marine sequence of sands, silts and clays with a fine grained basal sandstone and the Bulldog Shale, comprising mainly shale with calcareous nodules. (Wells tapping this aquifer are generally far too saline for anything but stock usage). Most artesian wells draw their supplies from the Algebuckina Sandstone of Late Jurassic Age comprising mainly fine to coarse sandstone, and this aquifer has been extensively developed for pastoral and domestic purposes.

### Recharge

The unconfined aquifer is recharged through local rainfall and run-off along drainage channels. Most station wells were drilled or dug along watercourses to obtain maximum benefit from any recharge available. The artesian aquifer receives its main recharge from southwest Queensland and New South Wales.

### Standing Water Level

Water levels in the Tertiary-Quaternary sediments range from 3 m to 26 m below the surface. Water in these sediments rises to various levels due to topographic effects and seasonal variations of recharge.

Wells in the artesian pressure aquifer flow continuously.

### Salinity

Salinity of the groundwater varies depending on the aquifer penetrated. In the Tertiary-Quaternary aquifers salinities range from 407 to 9953 mg/l with an average of approximately 3500 mg/l. (Muddy Hole Bore on Clifton Hills Station penetrated groundwater of 43732 mg/l and was promptly backfilled).

Salinities of the artesian aquifers vary according to well head temperatures. When converted back to standard 25°C they range from 483 to 1059 mg/l with an average of 700 mg/l. Well head temperatures range from 76°C to 98°C with salinities generally 500 to 1500 mg/l higher than before conversion to standard temperature (see Fig. 3).

### Yield

Yields range from 16 to 216 m<sup>3</sup>/day with an approximate average of 100 m<sup>3</sup>/day in the unconfined aquifer. The flowing wells yield between 1176 to 3279 m<sup>3</sup>/day with an average of 2160 m<sup>3</sup>/day.



## Well Construction and Equipment

Older wells (now completely abandoned) were hand dug and timbered to below the water table; all have been backfilled or partially backfilled (silted in) due to constant flooding and neglect. Drilled wells in the non-artesian area are steel cased and slotted in the aquifer. They are equipped with windmills with a pumpjack on standby for windless periods. Wells tapping the artesian aquifer are cased with steel or PVC and fitted with slotted liners, but more recently with screens. All of the artesian wells in the area are controlled by stop valves regulating their flow. (Goyders Lagoon Bore at Clifton Hills station is leaking below ground level as water bubbles at the surface 1 metre from the well head). Due to the distances from artesian wells that water is required, windmills have been strategically placed near tanks to pump the water to its various destinations.

## GROUNDWATER POLLUTION

Due to the lack of industry and population, there does not seem to be any danger of groundwater pollution.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The entire area is dependent on artesian wells for their water supplies. Very few graziers utilise the unconfined aquifer and most wells within this aquifer have been backfilled or have 'silted in' through constant flooding. The neglect of these wells was caused by their excessive salinity and unreliability. Owners stated that they were economically impractical due to inaccessibility during wet weather and most tracks to these wells have been washed out and never re-graded. Attempted re-locating of these wells was impossible and in most cases the owners warned against attempting it. The area was surveyed during a rainy period making access to most wells very difficult. Station

personnel were very helpful and assisted greatly in the completion of this survey.

There has been no new water well drilling in the area since the last survey, done in the early 1960's. In 1970 the Bureau of Mineral Resources did some stratigraphic drilling and all but one hole was backfilled. This hole on Kalamurina station was cased and has been left abandoned due to very saline water. This Department has carried out rehabilitation work throughout the area and all flowing wells have been controlled. (With the exception of Goyders Lagoon Bore mentioned in "Well Construction and Equipment").

JS:GAMacK:ZV

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Notes. Sheet SG/54-13 (published).

# APPENDIX I

## PHOTOGRAPHS OF FLOWING WELLS

<u>WELL NAME</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>	<u>UNIT NO.</u>	<u>NEG. NO.</u>
New Kopperamanna Bore	Well Head	6440-01	30785
New Kopperamanna Bore	Discharge Pipe	6440-01	30786
Cannawaukaninna Bore	Well Head	6440-04	30787
Cannawaukaninna Bore	Cooling Pond	6440-04	30788
Mirra Mitta Bore	Well Head	6642-02	39789
Mirra Mitta Bore	Discharge Pipe & Pond	6642-02	30790
Mt. Gason Bore	Discharge Pipe & Pond	6643-02	30791
Mt. Gason Bore	Well Head	6643-02	30793
Goyders Lagoon Bore	Well Head	6643-01	30792
Goyders Lagoon Bore	Discharge Pipe & Pond	6643-01	30794
Pandie Burra Bore	Discharge Pipe & Cooling Channel	6744-01	39797
Pandie Burra Bore	Sampling Precautions	6744-01	30798
Mungeranie Bore	Sampling Point	6641-03	30796

Note: Film broke in camera and Mulka, Pandieburra and Mungeranie were not photographed. These should be photographed during next visit to the area.

APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF WATER WELL DATA

CONTENTS

PAGE

(1:100 000 SHEET)

6540	1
6542	2
6640	3
6641	4
6642	5
6643	6
6644	7
6645	8
6742	9
6743	10
6744	11
6745	12

6545 No wells plotted	6645	6745
6544 No wells plotted	6644	6744
6543 No wells plotted	6643	6743
6542	6642	6742
6541 No wells plotted	6641	6741 No wells plotted
6540	6640	6740 No wells plotted

PANDIE PANDIE  
1:250 000 SHEET  
1:100 000 enlarge-  
ment

GASON  
1:250 000 SHEET  
1:100 000 enlarge-  
ment

KOPPERAMANNA  
1:250 000 SHEET  
1:100 000 enlarge-  
ment

Note - Wells are numbered serially in each 1:100 000 SHEET.

①

三

SUMMARY OF WATER WELLS 1:100000 SHEET No 6542

②

[illegible]

③

五三



④

II-4

⑤

五

6

II-6

7

III-7

SUMMARY OF WATER WELLS 1:100000 SHEET No 6645

⑧

[illegible]

9

b-7

10

10

11





12

II-12



PLATE 1

GOYDERS LAGOON BORE (Artesian).

Showing well headworks beginning to deteriorate. Bottom left corner shows hole where leakage occurs from casing below ground level.

Neg. 30792



PLATE 2

MIRRA MITTA BORE (Artesian).

Showing well headworks recently rehabilitated. Small leak in discharge pipe to left of photo.

Neg. 30789



PLATE 3

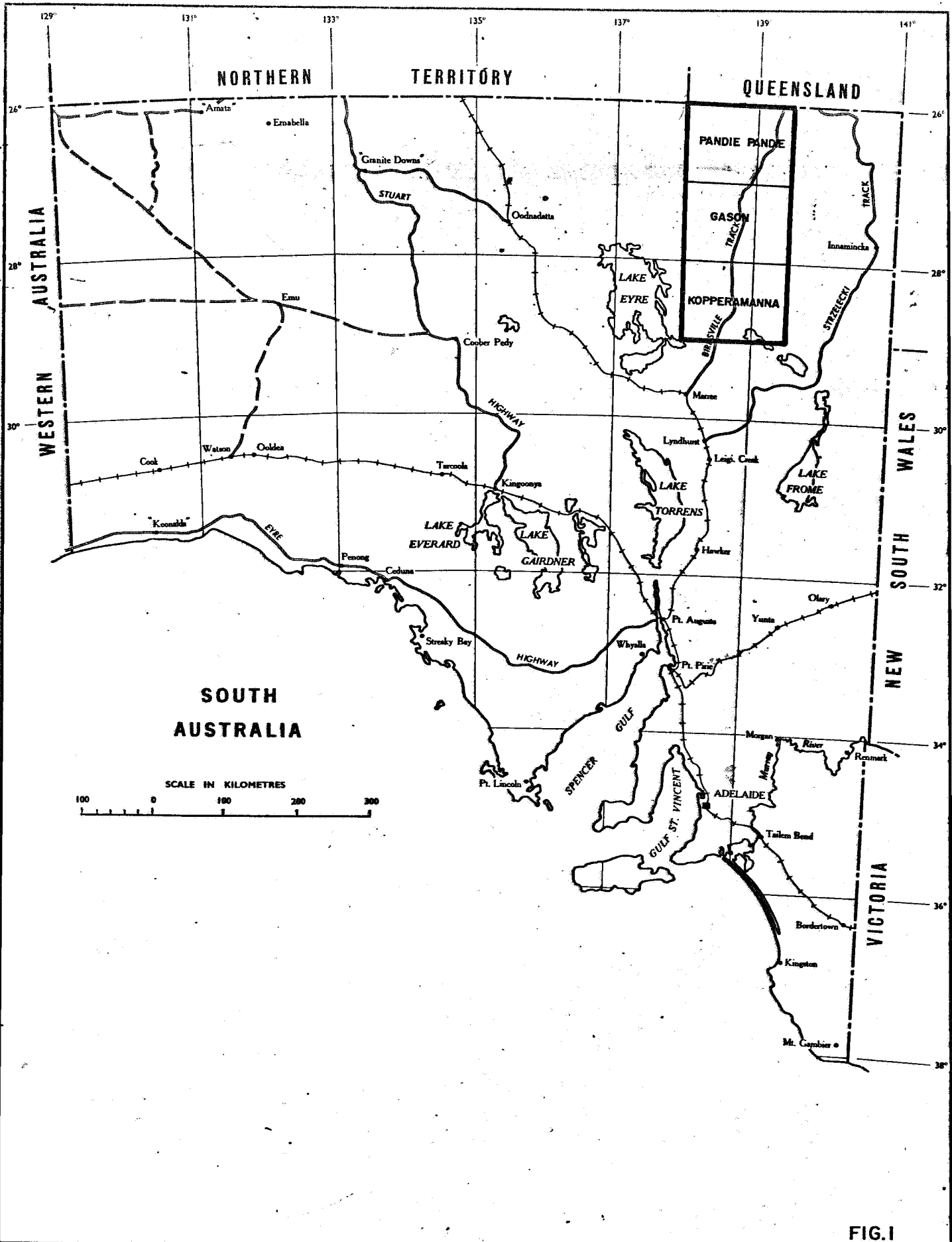
PANDIE BURRA BORE (Artesian).  
 Showing discharge line with cooling channels.  
 Neg. 30798



PLATE 4

PANDIE BURRA BORE (Artesian).  
 Showing precautions needed for sampling. This sampling  
 method applies to all wells in this part of the Great  
 Artesian Basin.

Neg. 30798



**DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND ENERGY  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**KOPPERAMANNA, GASON, PANDIE PANDIE**

**1:250 000 WATER WELL SURVEY**

**LOCALITY PLAN**

Compiled J. SAFTA

Drn. E. C.

Ckd.

*ESH*

Date: AUG. 1, 1979

Dr. No.

**S14213**



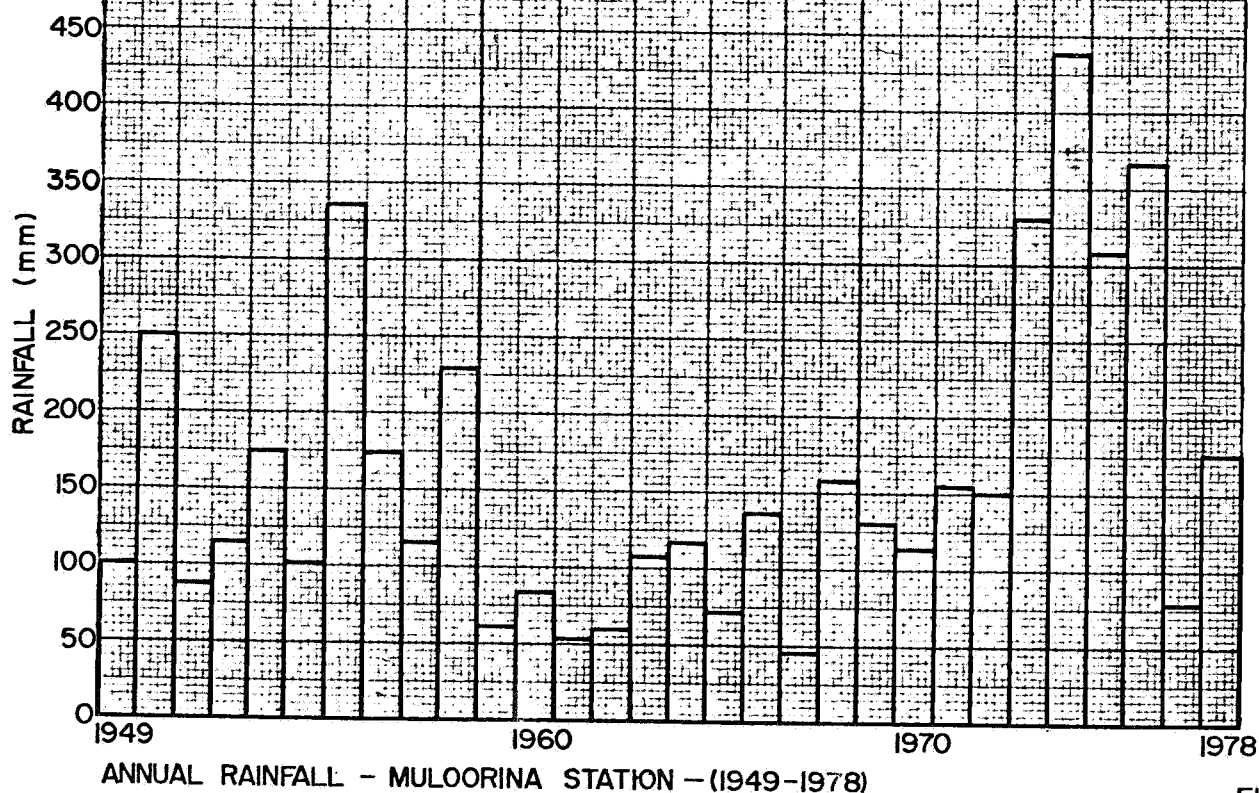
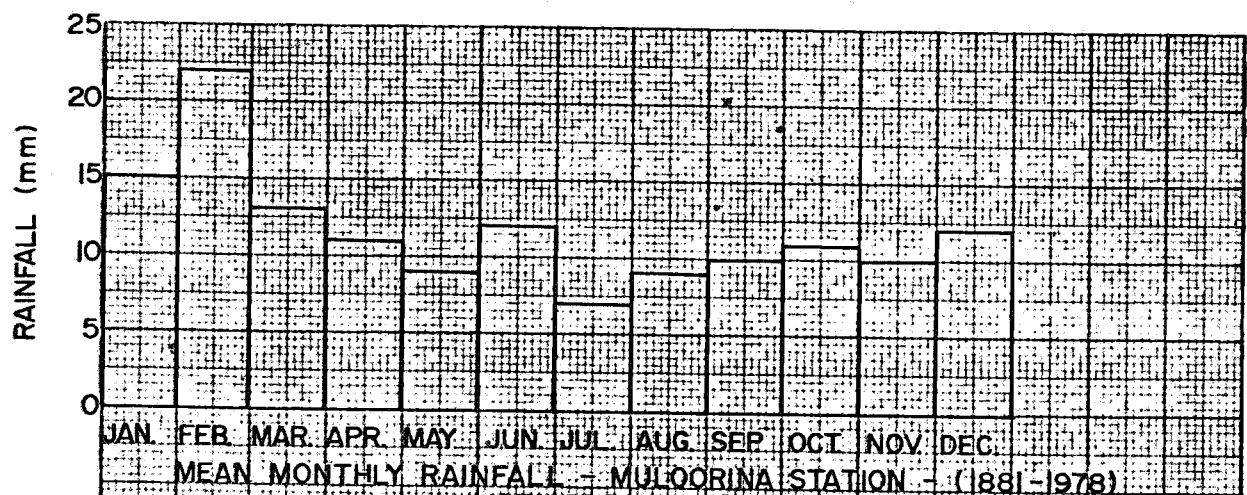


FIG. 2a

COMPILED J. SAFTA		DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND ENERGY SOUTH AUSTRALIA		SCALE	
DRN E.C.	CKD	KOPPERAMANNA, GASON, PANDIE PANDIE 1:250 000 WATER WELL SURVEY		DATE AUG. 1, 1979	
MULLOORINA STATION		RAINFALL STATISTICS		PLAN NUMBER	
				SI4214	

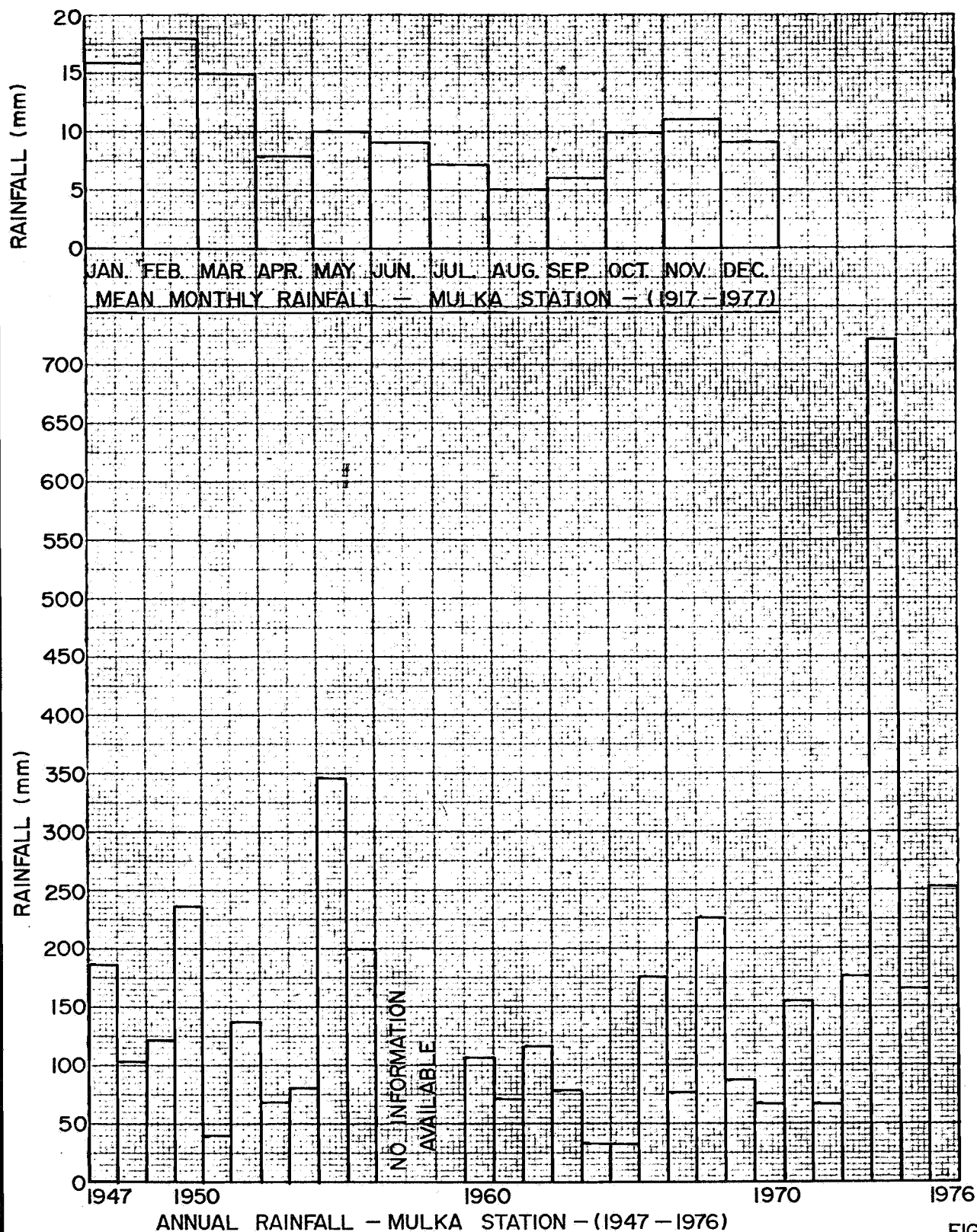


FIG.2b

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND ENERGY  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

KOPPERAMANNA, GASON, PANDIE PANDIE  
1:250 000 WATER WELL SURVEY  
RAINFALL STATISTICS  
MULKA STATION

SCALE

DATE AUG. 2, 1979

PLAN NUMBER

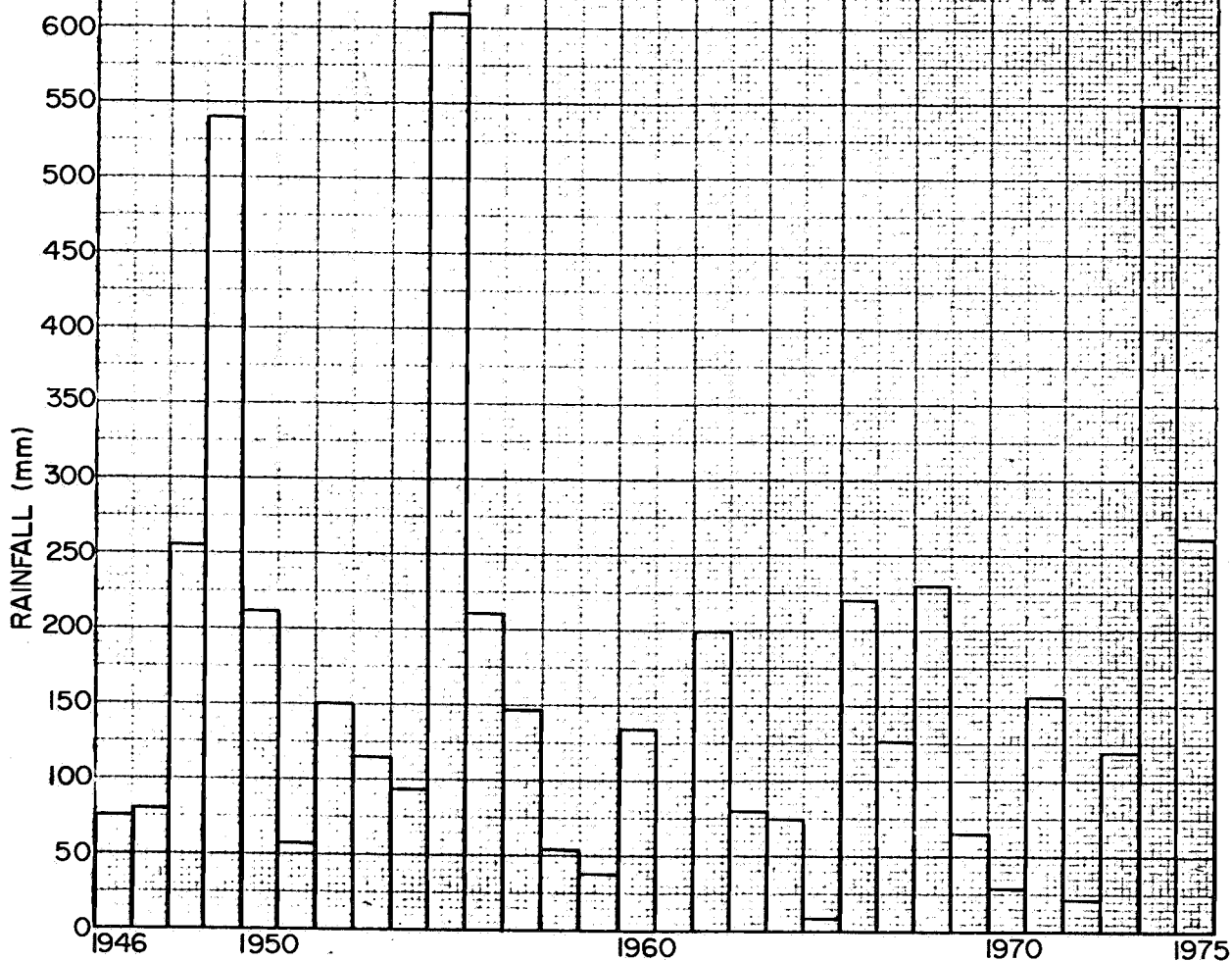
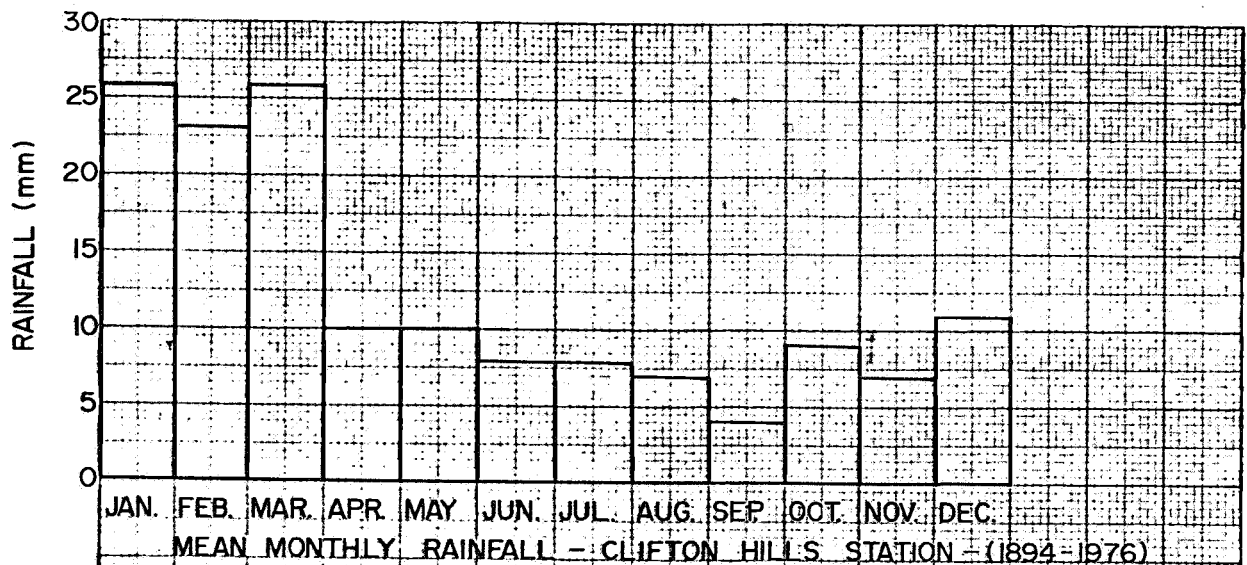
SI4215

COMPILED J. SAFTA

DRN E.C.

CKD

*tsr*



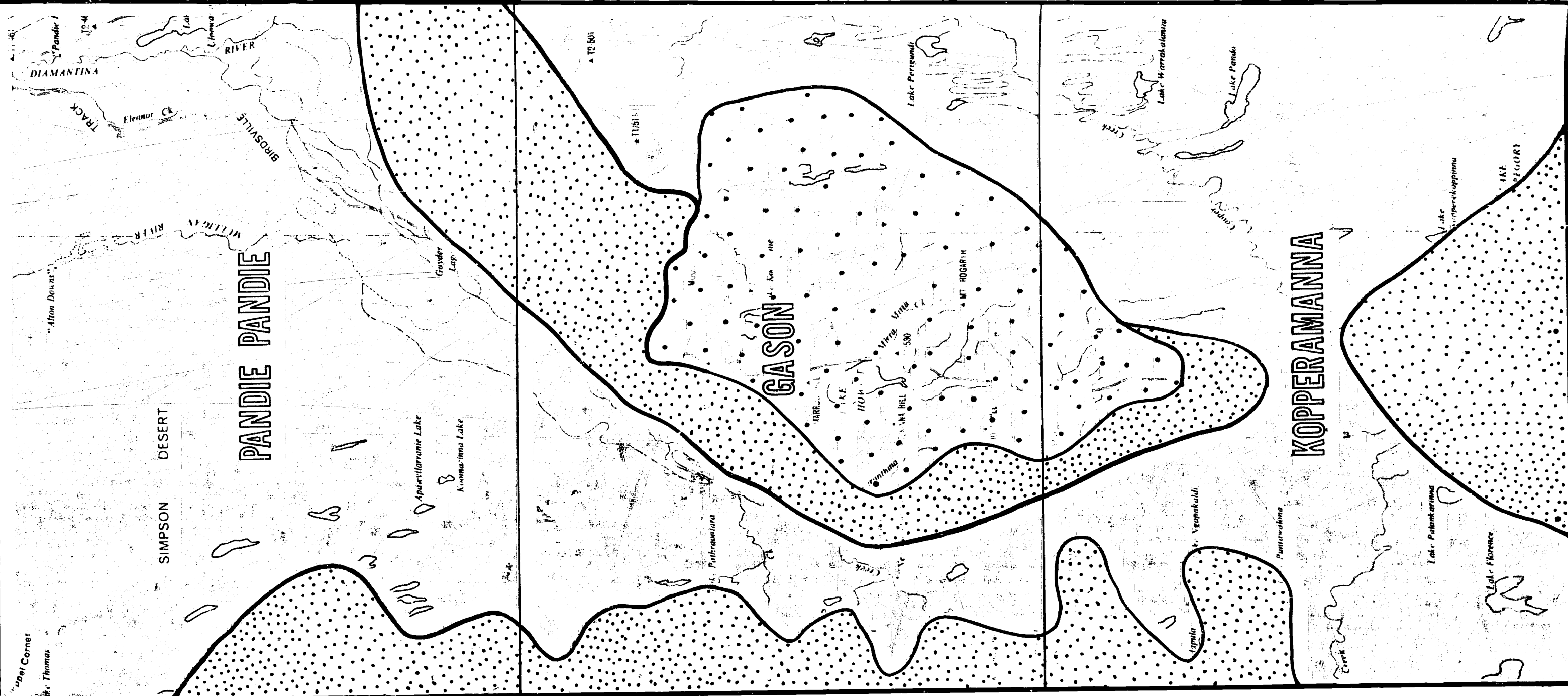
ANNUAL RAINFALL - CLIFTON HILLS STATION - (1946-1975)

FIG.2c

		DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND ENERGY SOUTH AUSTRALIA		SCALE:	
COMPILED J. SAFTA		KOPPERAMANNA, GASON, PANDIE PANDIE 1:250 000 WATER WELL SURVEY RAINFALL STATISTICS CLIFTON HILLS STATION		DATE AUG. 2, 1979	
DRN E.C.	CKD			PLAN NUMBER	
lrl				SI4216	







## LEGEND

**CAINZOIC:**

## Sand sheets and sand dunes

Sand, silt and clay silcreted in places, and lake deposits .

**MESOZOIC:**

Winton formation -  
feldspathic sandstone

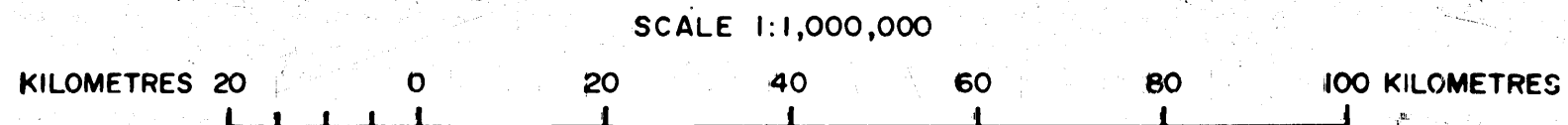


FIG. 4

		DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND ENERGY SOUTH AUSTRALIA	SCALE 1:1,000,000
COMPILED J. SAFTA		KOPPERAMANNA, GASON, PANDIE PANDIE 1:250,000 WATER WELL SURVEY GENERALIZED GEOLOGY	DATE AUGUST 21,1979
DRN E.C.	CKD		PLAN NUMBER
<i>ESL</i>			79-608