

ESSO PRODUCTION RESEARCH COMPANY

HYDROCARBON SOURCE CHARACTERISTICS OF
CANNED CUTTINGS FROM 17/9-1, OFFSHORE NORWAY

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Cuttings were analyzed from the interval 1500-9200 ft. Charges for this service work were billed to our Job No. 6347.

The analytical results are given in Tables I-III and they are summarized graphically in Fig. 1. The data are interpreted as follows:

<u>Approximate Interval (feet)</u>	<u>Maturity</u>	<u>Source Quality (Richness)</u>	<u>Indigenous Hydrocarbons Expected (If Reservoired)</u>
1500-2400	Immature	Fair	Lean
2400-3900	Immature	Poor	Lean
3900-6100	Immature	Fair to Good	Gas
6100-7200	Transitional	Fair to Good	Gas (minor liquids)
7200-8800	Mature	Rich (Shales Only)*	Wet gas or condensate
8800-9200	Mature	Fair (Shales Only)*	Wet gas or condensate

*The interval below about 7300 ft contains considerable amounts of volcanic materials, which undoubtedly causes the average source richness of this section to be somewhat poorer. The cuttings gas yields were mostly rather modest below 7300 ft, suggesting an overall rating of only "fair" at best, although individual shale beds appear to be "good to rich" potential oil sources.

The interval below 7200 ft would be rated as an oil source rather than a wet gas or condensate source if it were not for the low cyclohexane/methylcyclopentane values (Fig. 1). In the past we have not found oil production associated with strata for which CH/MCP values are less than about 0.25-0.30. The kerogen in these samples was predominantly amorphous, which we generally rate as oil prone.

Kerogen alterations of "2" below 7200 ft are sufficient to rate the amorphous material as "mature." The coaly and woody materials are probably still at the "transitional" stage of maturation. Relatively high gasoline yields from these samples support the "mature" ratings.

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PROCEDURES

Compositions and concentrations of hydrocarbon gases in the air spaces above the cuttings in the sample cans were determined by gas chromatography. Similar data were obtained on gases released from a standard mixture of cuttings and tap water after two minutes of agitation in a Waring blender. Combined results on the air space gas plus the cuttings gas were calculated for each sample. The data were plotted graphically to show vertical variations in total gas (C₁-C₄) and wet gas (C₂-C₄), and a graphical plot was also made of the percent wet gas in total gas (Figure 1). Detailed results of the analyses are listed in Table I.

Chips of uniform lithologies were picked by hand from the heterogeneous mixtures of chips in the original samples. These are described in Table II. As noted in Table II, six of the samples consisted of slurries of disaggregated formation clays, possibly mixed with drilling mud. These samples were analyzed "as is" and are not as reliable as the "picked" ones for rating source characteristics. Drilling muds may contain organic matter of various types, including considerable amounts of diesel oil or live crude oil.

Our standard analytical procedures were used for determining the C₄-C₇ content and the total organic content of the slurries and "picked" chips. These results are given in Table III and they are plotted graphically in Fig. 1. Visual kerogen characteristics of most of these samples were also determined (Table II and Fig. 1).

DISCUSSION

The cuttings gas profile suggests that only the interval in the vicinity of 7000-7400 ft in this well is a significant source. Samples from both above and below gave rather low total gas yields. However, some of the shales below 7400 ft appear on the basis of high total organic matter, predominantly amorphous kerogen, and high gasoline yields, to be rich potential oil sources. Apparently these shales are relatively thin beds separated by volcanic materials. Thus, the overall or average source potential may not be high.

The ratio cyclohexane/methycyclopentane (CH/MCP) is bothersome in that its use is still based purely on empirical evidence, without valid theoretical backing. Nevertheless, we have never yet found oil associated with a section where the values of CH/MCP are so consistently low as those for this well (Fig. 1 and Table III). Such a profile has always been found to be associated with gassy sections, if reservoired hydrocarbons were present at all.

TABLE II

Descriptions of "Picked" Sample Material and of Visual Kerogen, 17/9-1

(Kerogen by J. L. Morgan)

Depth (feet)	FTR No.	Gross Lithology	GSA Color Code	Kerogen Alteration	Types of Kerogen*		Other	Remarks
					Predominant	Secondary		
1700	61670.C	Mixture of mud and small chips, mod. calc.	5Y 5/1	1+	H,W	C	AI	
2300	-T	Shale, olive gray to med. dk. gray	5Y 4/1 - N4	1+	A,H	C	W	Abundant Pyrite
2600	-L	Chalk and chert, white	N9	1+	C	H	AI	"
3100	-Q	As above	N9	1+	A	AI	C	"
3600	61691-B	Chalk, pinkish white	5YR 9/1	1+	C	AI	W	"
3900	-E	Chert, minor limestone, friable	N8	1+	C	H	W	"
4000	-F	Mud, med. gray, v. calc.	N5	1+	C	W	A	
4700	-M	Mud, med. dark gray, mod. calc.	N4	2-	C	W	M,H	Also several micro-fossils with alteration "2"
5100	-Q	Mud and fine chips, med. dk. gray to med gray, v. calc.	N4-N5	2-	C	W	A,M	
5500	61693-A	Mixture of shale, claystone and drilling mud,	N5	2-	C	W	A,H	
6100	-C	Shale, med. gray	N5	2-	C	W	H	
6300	-I	Shale, med. dk. gray, fish debris	N4					
6600	-L	Mixture of mud and fine chips, med. olive gray, mod. calc.	5Y 5/1					
6900	-N	Shale, med. dk. gray	N4	2-	A,C	W	H	
7000	-P	Shale, as above	N4	2-	A,C	H	W	
7200	-R	Shale, med. dk. gray, v. fissile and splintery	N4					
7300	-S	Shale, as above	N4	2	A	C	W	Abundant Pyrite
7400	61740.A	Shale, med. dk. gray, v. fissile and splintery, with fish scales	N4					
7600	-C	Shale, med. dk. gray to dk. gray, as above	N4-N3	2	A	C	W	Abundant Pyrite
7800	-E	Shale, as above	N4-N3					
8000	-G	Shale, grayish black to dk. gray, thin prismatic chips	N2-N3	2	A	C	W	"
8100	-H	Shale and volcanics, dk. gray to med. dk. gray	N3-N4	2	A	C,AI	W	"
8300	-J	Shale, dk. gray; trace of volcanics	N3					
8500	-L	Shale, dk. gray, sl. calc.	N3	2	A	C	W	"
8700	-N	Shale and volcanics, olive black to med. dk. gray, sl. calc.	5Y 2/1-N4					
8800	-O	Volcanics, med. dk. gray to med. bluish gray	N4-N5-5R 5/1	2	A	C	W	"
9100	-R	Volcanics, variegated	N4-5R 5/1	2	A	C	W	"
9200	-S	Volcanics, shale, mica flakes mixture	N4-5Y 2/1					

*
A - Amorphous
AI - Algal
H - Herbaceous
W - Woody
M - Microplankton
C - Coaly

TABLE III

Total Organic Matter and Light Gasolines (C₄-C₇) in "Picked" Cuttings, 17/9-1

(Analyses by H. M. Fry)

Depth (ft)	EPR No.	Total Organic Matter (%)	C ₄ -C ₇ (ppm)	Correlation Ratios (See Table III-A)			CH* MCP
				C ₁ /C ₂	A/D ₂	C ₁ /D ₂	
1700	61670-C	.68	0.	-	-	-	-
2300	-I	.88	0.	-	-	-	-
2600	-L	.07	0.	-	-	-	-
3100	-Q	.10	0.	-	-	-	-
3600	61691-B	.15	0.	-	-	-	-
3900	-E	.12	0.	-	-	-	-
4000	-F	1.60	.21	.96	14.68	6.67	.37
4700	-M	1.62	0.	-	-	-	-
5100	-Q	1.10	1.8	.60	3.72	5.40	.25
5500	61693-A	1.15	.48	.72	6.46	5.84	.25
6100	-G	.56	.85	.80	8.76	7.04	.17
6300	-I	1.37	6.1	.55	4.17	5.62	.14
6600	-L	1.81	3.4	.68	5.00	6.77	.14
6800	-N	1.82	4.7	.90	3.43	7.21	.20
7000	-P	1.88	2.4	.78	3.87	7.57	.17
7200	-R	5.53	10.8	.83	2.67	5.28	.37
7300	-S	5.73	36.2	.62	2.72	8.88	.40
7400	61760-A	3.85	11.0	.94	2.65	7.45	.27
7600	-C	3.28	53.7	.63	2.83	5.15	.21
7800	-E	3.44	101.5	.53	3.36	4.66	.19
8000	-G	3.06	87.3	.53	3.23	4.88	.18
8100	-H	3.52	91.9	.59	3.24	5.40	.20
8300	-J	3.32	132.8	.60	3.35	4.82	.23
8500	-L	4.09					
8700	-N	4.27	90.8	.59	3.30	5.14	.18
8800	-O	1.17	22.6	.52	19.06	4.33	.20
9100	-R	.37	7.1	.60	2.92	4.66	.21
9200	-S	2.01	37.2	.53	3.32	4.80	.19

*CH - Cyclohexane
MCP - Methylcyclopentane