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63

# GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AT THE KOOMBOOLOOMBA DAMSITE, NEAR RAVENSHOE, QUEENSLAND

by

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# CONTENTS

	ABSTR	ACT							Page 1	
1.	INTROI	OUCTION	<b>A</b>						i	
2.	GEOLO	Υ			a a				2	
3.	METHOI	OS AND	EQUIPME	nt	į.				3	
		(a)	Seismic	refract	ion					
		(b)	Resisti	vity Con	stant Spacin	g				
		(c)	Magnetic	C						
4.	RESULA	rs							5	
		(a)	Density	and uni	t weight					
		(b)	Seismic	velocit	у					
		(c)	Elastic	propert	ies of rocks	į.				
		(d)	Depth to	o bedroc	k .				*	
		(e)	Type of	bedrock						
5.	CONCLUSIONS									
6.	REFERI	ENCES							3	
				ILLUS	TRATIONS.					
Plat	e 1.	Local:	ity Plan							
	2.	Geolog	s <b>y</b>							
	3.	Section	ons on g	eophysic	al traverses	G and	F			
	4.	11	11	n	11	E "	D .			
	5•	u	11	11	и .	C and	В			
	6.	11	11	n		A				
	7•	n	11	H	11	H, I	and J			
	8.	11	11	и "	II	K				
	9•	n	II	н	11	L and	M			
	10.	н	11	11	11	N "	0			
	11.	11	н	31	11	X "	¥			
	12.	ti	н	n	!1	V, U	and T			
	13.	11	H	υ,	, 11	S and	R.			
	14.	11	12	**	17	Q "	P.	3		

#### ABSTRACT.

Geophysical investigations were made at the Koombooloomba Dam Site, Queensland to investigate foundation conditions.

Using the seismic refraction method the maximum depth to the bedrock was determined as approximately 148 feet. The dynamic elastic properties of the bedrock are given, as calculated from longitudinal and transverse wave velocities.

The bedrock consists of granite and porphyry and the boundaries between the formations were located using data from seismic refraction, resistivity and magnetic techniques. The possibility of the existence of three basalt dykes is indicated.

The overburden consists of soil, decomposed rock and weathered and jointed rock.

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The output of the Kareeya Power Station near Ravenshoe, Queensland, which utilises the drop of the Tully River on and near Tully Falls, is affected by fluctuations of the water flow which has been recorded to vary between 30,000 cusecs (1927) and 10 cusecs (1946).

In order that the generation of power may be continuous the Department of Public Works of the Co-ordinator General's Office, Queensland, (referred to as C.O.G.) is about to construct the Koombooloomba Dam about seven miles upstream from Tully Falls (Plate 1).

The purpose of the dam is to store water to the extent of 21,000 million gallons during the summer and to release it at the required rate during the following winter. The area of the reservoir will be about 3,750 acres and the water level will be raised 115 ft. above the original river level.

It is possible that corrective measures will have to be taken to prevent excessive leakage from the reservoir, especially at the points where a narrow ridge divides the reservoir from creeks.

In order to obtain a preliminary assessment of the need for such corrective measures the C.O.G. asked the Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics, to determine by geophysical survey the depth to the unweathered rock along three critical sections of the storage area, namely:(a) the left bank of the Tully River along the Monday Creek, (b) the right hand bank of the Tully River along the Campbell Creek, and (c) the Ridge Section where the Atherton Tableland drops down to the coastal plains.

The survey was carried out between 10/9/58 and 30/10/58 by a geophysical party consisting of E.J. Polak, party leader and P.E. Mann, geophysicist, with four field assistants provided by C.O.G. The C.O.G. also made a topographical survey along the traverse lines.

Seismic refraction, resistivity and magnetic methods were used.

It is desired to acknowledge help given by officers of the C.O.G. at Koombooloomba.

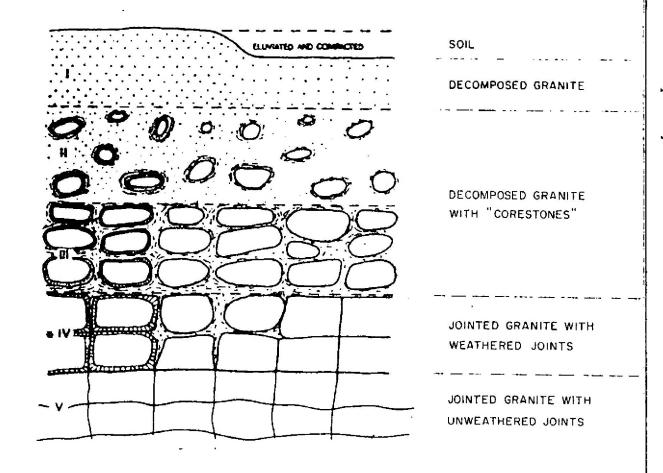


FIGURE 1. ILLUSTRATING THE WEATHERING OF GRANITE IN TROPICAL CLIMATE (RUXTON and BERRY, 1957)

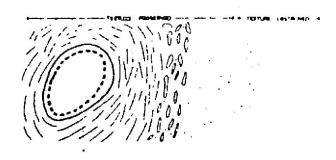


FIGURE 2: SHOWING THE WEATHERING OF GRANITE AS ILLUSTRATED BY FIG. 1, IN DETAIL (RUXTON and BERRY, 1957)

#### 2. GEOLOGY

The restlegy of the Koreeya Power Station, Koombooloomba damsite catchment and storage areas is described by the following:-

- (a) Denmend (1947 and 1949), who deals briefly with the geology of the proposed Kareeya plant shouldn, giros notes on the tunnel profiles of the project, and makes general remarks on the results of 29 test pits in the damsite area.
- (b) Gloe (1950), who extends the geological investigation to the approaches of the damsite, and gives sections of 23 drill holes.
- (c) Dunlop (1956), who describes rocks exposed by damsite excavations.
- (d) Carter (1956), who examines 45 rock samples from the Tully River and Campbell Creek.

The catchment and storage area of the Koombooloomba Dam is covered by dense rain forest, which, together with a thick soil cover, makes a detailed geological investigation difficult.

Plate 2 shows the rock types, as far as are known, derived from the above mentioned geological investigations.

#### (i) Granite (see Plate 2).

Granite crops out along the Tully River in the vicinity of the dam. Granite outcrops were also observed in the Monday Creek (south-east of the dam). To the north-east granite was found along the forestry road, and in shotholes on traverses S and X, and near a water tower south-west of traverse S.

The granite in the vicinity of the dam is coarse-crystalline, and evenly grained. The main mineral constituents are quartz and felspar, with micas. Elsewhere the granite was found to be fine grained.

The granite is jointed and weathers easily, especially the coarse crystalline type. The maximum depth of weathering proved by drilling on the damsite was 131 ft. In weathering, the felspars are partly, or completely changed into kaolin.

In several places the granite is cut by aplite and pegmatite veins; the contacts of the veins with granite are not weathered.

In this report the terms "decomposed" granite (or rock) and "weathered" granite (or rock) are used. With "decomposed" granite is meant a weathered granite in which the original texture cannot be distinguished any more; with "weathered" granite the original texture can still be recognised although the minerals have been partly or completely changed by the weathering process.

Fig. 1 shows a profile commonly found with weathering granites in tropical climates. Ruxton and Berry (1957) distinguish four zones. Zone 1 consists of soil and/or decomposed granite and Zone IV of jointed granite with possibly minor weathering at the joints. Zones II and III form gradual transitions between Zones I and IV. The boundaries between zones are not sharp, and therefore somewhat arbitrary.

Fig. 2 show, onlarged details of Zone II.

### (ii) Porphyry.

This rock crops out approximately 2000 ft. north-east of the dam, in the Tully River, and in Campbell Creek to the west of the dam. On the right hand saddle bank the presence of porphyry was proved by drillhole R.B.S.2. Outcrops of porphyry have been found along the forestry road, and porphyry was found in shotholes on traverses P and V.

The porphyries belong to the family of quartz diorites to tonalites (quartz diorite with less than 10 per centum of quartz) and hence have almost the same composition as granites except that the felspars do not contain orthoclase. Generally, the quartz diorite porphyry specimens showed a coarse crystalline ground mass, whereas the tonalite porphyry has a fine-crystalline ground mass.

#### (iii) Intrusive rocks.

#### (a) Basalt.

During the excavation for the dam a basalt dyke was uncovered, the basalt being highly weathered. Similar dykes were found in the quarry for the dam (south-west of the dam, along the road to Ravenshoe) and to the north of the right hand saddle bank along the forestry road.

#### (b) Trachyte.

A dyke of trachyte was found in one of the tributaries of the Campbell Creek west of the right hand saddle bank (see Plate 2).

#### 3. METHODS AND EQUIPMENT

#### (i) Seismic Method.

The seismic refraction method of exploration depends on the contrast in the elastic properties of different rock formations and on discontinuities between these formations. Full details of the method have already been given in the report on the Earron Falls geophysical survey. (Polak and Mann, 1959).

In the Koombooloombe seismic survey great difficulty was experienced in transmitting enough energy into the ground to obtain a record on which the arrival times of the seismic wave were sufficiently distinct. It was therefore necessary to drill shot holes to 25 ft deep and to charge them with up to 50 lbs. of explosives. Where these shot-holes did not reach the water-table the explosives were tamped with water (400 gals. of water were often used in one hole). To limit the number of shot-holes which had to be drilled with a hand suger, shots were fired 250 ft. from each end of the traverse and repeated at the same shot-point as the geophone spread was moved along the traverse.

In the field work and calculations the "Method of Differences" was used. (Heiland, 1946; Polak et al., 1959).

Theoretically the velocity of longitudinal and transverse waves in elastic media is given by the following formulae (Loet, 1950):-

$$V_{L} = \frac{1}{12} \quad \frac{E}{\delta} \quad \frac{1 - \delta}{(1 + \delta)} \quad (1 - 2\delta)$$

$$V_{t} = \frac{1}{12} \quad \frac{E}{\delta} \quad \frac{1}{2(1 + \delta)}$$

in which:

 $V_L$  = Longitudinal velocity in ft/sec.

V<sub>t</sub> = Transverse velocity in ft/sec.

E = Young's Modulus in lb/sq. in.

T = Poisson's Ratio

 $\delta$  = Density lb.  $\sec^2 \ln^{-1} / \ln^3$ 

It is therefore possible to calculate all the other dynamical properties of rocks:-

G = Modulus of rigidity in lb/sq.in.

B = Bulk modulus in lb/sq.in.

$$\begin{pmatrix} V_L \\ V_t \end{pmatrix}^2 = \frac{\sigma - 1}{\sigma - \frac{1}{2}}$$

$$E = 144 \quad V_L^2 \quad \delta \cdot \quad \frac{(1 + \sigma) \quad (1 - 2\sigma)}{1 - \sigma}$$

$$G = \frac{2}{2(1 + \sigma)}$$

$$B = \frac{E}{3(1 - 2\sigma)}$$

The seismic recording equipment used in the survey was a 12-channel reflection-refraction seismograph manufactured by the Midwestern Geophysical Laboratory, Tulsa, Oklahoma, with Midwestern geophones of natural frequency 8 c-p.s. to detect longitudinal waves and S.I.E. geophones with natural frequency of 6 c.p.s. to detect transverse waves.

#### (ii) Resistivity Traversing.

Differences in the structure and composition of the rocks produce variations in their electrical resistivity. Hard, non-porous and unweathered rocks as a rule have a high resistivity. Shearing and fracturing results in localised weathered zones which produce a decrease in resistivity because of the subsequent rise in the amount of saline water contained in them. In general, it may be said that the resistivity of the rock is inversely proportional to the product of its porosity and the salinity of the pore solutions.

A method of constant spacing resistivity traversing, similar to that used at the Barron Falls, was employed at Koombooloomba (Polak et al, 1959).

The equipment used was the Megger Earth Resistivity Tester manufactured by Evershed and Vignoles Ltd., London.

#### (iii) Magnetic Method.

The measured magnetic intensity at any point on the earth's surface is mainly the resultant of two vectors, an induced magnetic intensity vector in the approximate direction of the earth's magnetic field and a remanent magnetic intensity vector, which may lie in any direction, inherent to the rock. Magnetic measurements may indicate, in certain areas, such features as faults, and boundaries between near-surface formations, and it is sometimes possible also to obtain rough depth estimates from these measurements. The magnetic susceptibility of a rock is principally related to its magnetite content. In weathering the magnetite is changed into haematite or limonite, thus lowering the magnetic susceptibility of the rock. Hence, weathered dykes (e.g. a weathered basalt dyke) may show as a "low" on the magnetic profile.

A Watts vertical force variometer manufactured by Hilger and Watts Ltd., London, was used, with a 50 ft. interval between the stations.

#### (iv) Traverses.

The arrangement of all geophysical traverses surveyed at Koomboo-

loomba is shown on Plate 2. These traverses may be grouped as follows:-

Left bank traverses. - Traverses A to G, Plates 3 to 6.

Right bank " - Traverses H to O, Plates 7 to 10.

Ridge traverses - Traverses P to X, Plates 11 to 14.

Table 1 gives the lengths of traverses surveyed by each geophysical method.

CABLE 1.

Section	Seismic (ft)	Resistivity (ft)	Mngnetic (ft)	
Left Bank	9150	-	9650	
Right Bank	<i>f</i> .950	2850	6950	
Ridge	8500	-	8500	
TOTAL	24500	2850	25100	

#### 4. RESULTS

#### (i) Density, Unit weight and porosity.

Table 2 gives the values of density, unit weight and porosity of granite and quartz-diorite porphyry from Koombooloomba. The values were obtained by measuring the weight of samples in air and in water.

TABLE 2.

Rock type	Density cgs units	Unit w <b>ei</b> ght lb/in ft.	Porosity	No. of samples
Granite	2.62	164.00	1.13	11
Quartz-diorite) porphyry	2.68	168.00	0.93	10

#### (ii) Velocities.

Although the principal objective of the seismic method is the determination of the depth to the elastic discontinuities, the seismic velocities are an indication of weathering, jointing and fracturing in shear-zone of the bedrock.

Fig. 1 (see chapter II, on geology) shows that in granites the intensity of weathering, and the amount of weathered material, decrease with increasing depth. The same feature is found for the quartz-diorite porplyry. (Suwa, Matsuzawa, Iida and Yamasaki 1958). From a study of Plates 3 to 5 and 7 to 14, it follows that the velocities may be grouped into soven groups, the lowest velocities corresponding to soil and decomposed rocks, the highest to unweathered rocks. Table 3 shows the above-mentioned seven groups, with a tentative interpretation of the velocities corresponding to certain rock types, into geological terms.

TABLE 3.

Group No.	Recorded velocities ft/sec.	Rock types			
1	1000	Soil			
2	1400 - 3000	Decomposed granite or porphyry unconsolidated rock.			
3	3000 - 5000	Very weathered granite or porphyry.			
4	6000 - 9000	Weathered granite or porphyry.			
5	12000 - 15000	Jointed, fractured and/or sheared granite or porphyry; joints or fractures weathered.			
6	15000 - 16500	Unweathered rock, probably granite, may be jointed and some joints may be slightly weathered.			
7	16500 – 20000	Unweathered rock, mostly porphyry.			

As a rough approximation, Zones I, II, III and IV of Figure 1 (see chapter II) may respectively be fitted into groups 2, 3, 4, and 5 of Table 3.

#### (iv) Elastic properties of rocks.

Table 4 shows the values of the elastic properties of the rocks and the data from which they were calculated. An apparent velocity value was used to calculate Poisson's Ratio. Apparent velocity is defined as the velocity obtained by dividing the distance between shot-point and geophone by the time taken for the wave to cover the distance.

The value of the Poisson's Ratio calculated from the apparent velocities may differ from the value calculated from true velocities. For the conditions met with at Koombooloomba the errors are small (4 to 10 per cent) as the errors decrease with increasing distance between the shot-point and the geophone.

Other elastic properties were calculated by the use of the formulae given in Part 3 of this report.

Experimental evidence shows that the values of all elastic properties of rocks obtained by dynamical methods (seismic wave propagation) are generally higher than those obtained statically (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1953).

#### (v) Depth to the bedrock.

The results of the depth determination are shown on Plates 3 to 14 in the form of geological sections on the seismic traverses. The depth to the fresh rock was calculated, using an apparent velocity value obtained on weathering spreads. Recorded seismic velocities are shown on Table 3 Plates 3 to 14. On a short traverse one weathering spread was generally placed in the middle of the traverse; more than one weathering spread was placed on longer traverses. This method may introduce some error in depth determination as it assumes uniformity in the proportions of different zones in the vertical section. Thus in sections where the rock is more resistant to weathering and large "core stones" are left on/or near the surface, the thickness of the decomposed and weathered rock may be underestimated.

The accuracy of depth determination may be lower on traverses A, B and part of C. Over this section the shots were only fired on one side of the spread; some in line, some broadside. With shots in one direction only it is necessary to assume the seismic velocity of the rock to calculate the thickness of the overlying rocks. A wrong assumption can cause errors in absolute depth to the fresh rock, but the error in relative depth from station to station along the traverse is likely to be much smaller and the profile shown for the surface of the fresh rock is expected to be quite accurate.

#### (vi) Type of the bedrock.

It has been mentioned before (Table 3) that the seismic velocity in granite is lower than in porphyry. On the left bank of the Tully River, where only granite appears to be present, the seismic velocity is 16,500 ft/sec or less (see Plates 3 to 6). Three drill-holes placed on the right hand saddle bank dam (see Plate 2 and Plate 8) proved the boundary between granite to the south and porphyry to the north. The seismic velocity in the unweathered rock south of the drill-hole RHB 2 is 16,500 ft/sec. or less (see Plates 7 and 8). The seismic velocity to the north of the right hand saddle bank dam up to Station 339, traverse 0 (Plate 10) is greater than 16,500 ft/sec. with one exception at Stations 301 to 310 (Plate 10) where it is 14,000 - 15,000 ft/sec.

This does not necessarily prove that all this area is underlain by porphyry, as the magnetic and resistivity profiles show great variations in intensity. The sudden decrease of the magnetic intensity on Station N 302 to N 306 (Plate 10) may be an indication of the existence of a very weathered basalt dyke, possibly along a boundary between two types of rooks, of lower resistivity and higher magnetic intensity to the south and of higher resistivity and lower magnetic susceptibility to the north. (See 3, (iii)).

Further north the magnetic profile is very disturbed, suggesting changes of rock type. The "low" in magnetic intensity on Stations N 309 and N 325 to N 327 may be an indication of the existence of other basaltic dykes in this area.

On Traverse O, north of the station O 338, the velocity drops below the value of 16,500 ft/sec. Probably the scismic traverse crosses a main boundary between porphyry to the south and granite to the north. The existence of this boundary was envisaged by geologists and is shown on Plate 2.

On the ridge section seismic velocities are generally lower than on the other sections. A maximum of 18,000 ft/sec. was recorded on the north end of Traverse P, where the perphyry is indicated on geological maps (see Plate 2). Further south the traverse passes over granite and the location of the boundary is not certain, but the seismic velocities are much lower. No increase in velocity was found on Traverse V (near station V 445 Plate 12) where highly weathered porphyry was located in a shot-hole. Further south the traverse crosses again over granites, as indicated on geological maps, and the seismic velocity there is at its minimum for the bedrock, 13,000 ft/sec. (on Traverse U, Plate 12).

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

The geophysical survey provided information on the depth to the bedrock along three critical sections of the edge of the reservoir. The overburden there consists of soil, and of highly weathered to jointed rock.

The bedrock consists of granite in areas of lower seismic velocity and of porphyry in areas where seismic velocity is over 16,500 ft/sec. The possibility of the existence of three basaltic dykes is indicated.

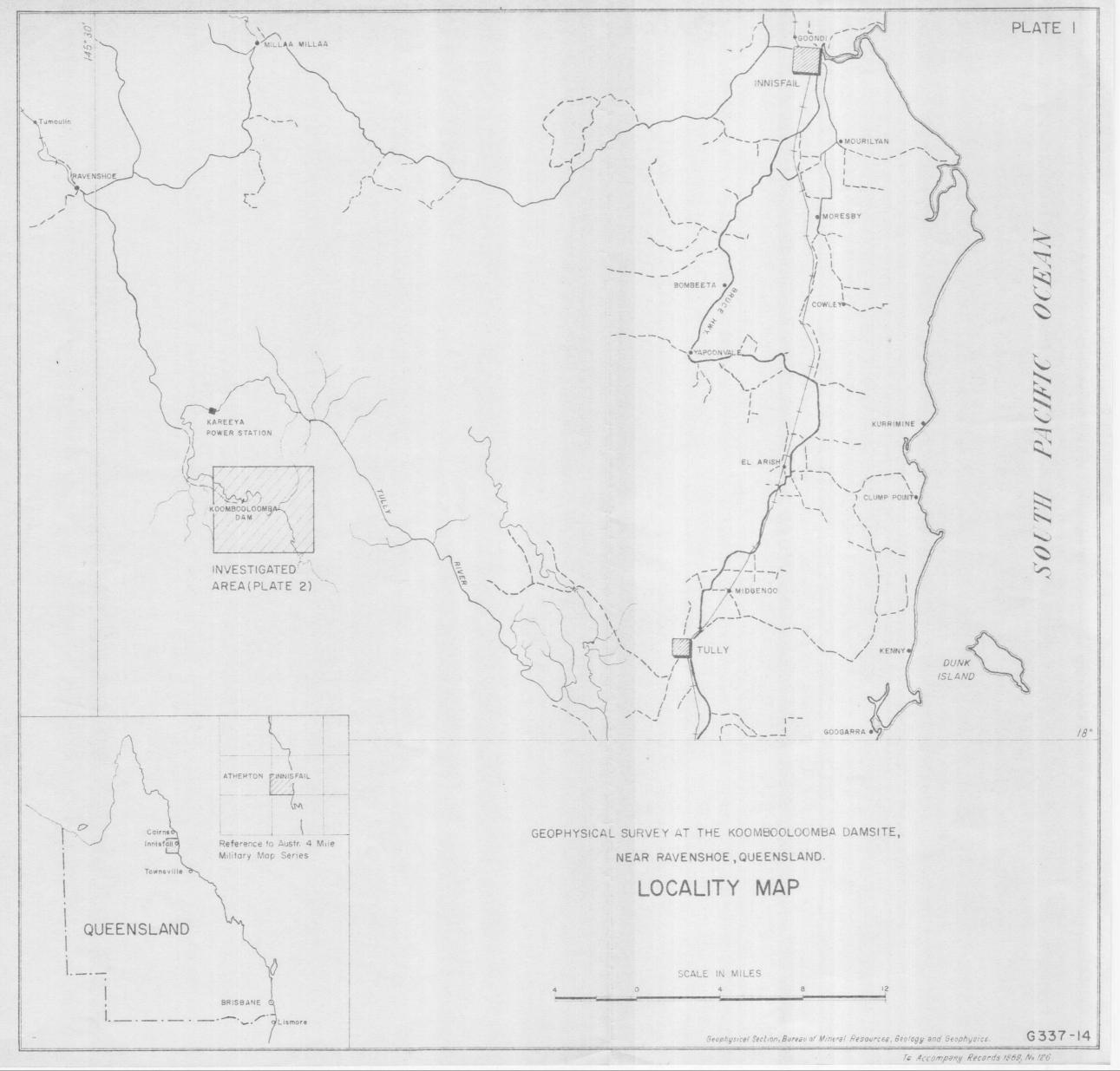
Poisson's Ratio of the unweathered bedrock, computed from longitudinal and transverse velocities is between 0.25 and 0.275. The corresponding value of the Young's Modulus varies from  $4.5 \times 10^6$  lb/in<sup>2</sup> to  $11.6 \times 10^6$  lb/in<sup>2</sup>.

## 6. REFERENCES

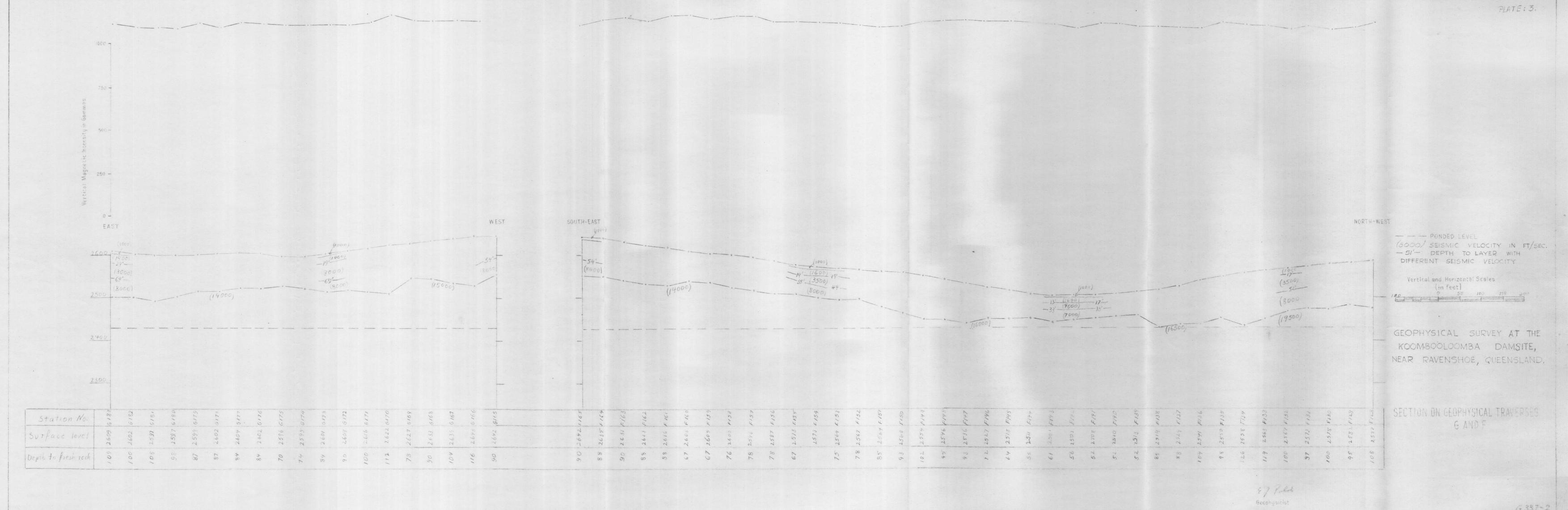
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TABLE 4 - Dynamical properties of rocks calculated from apparent velocities.

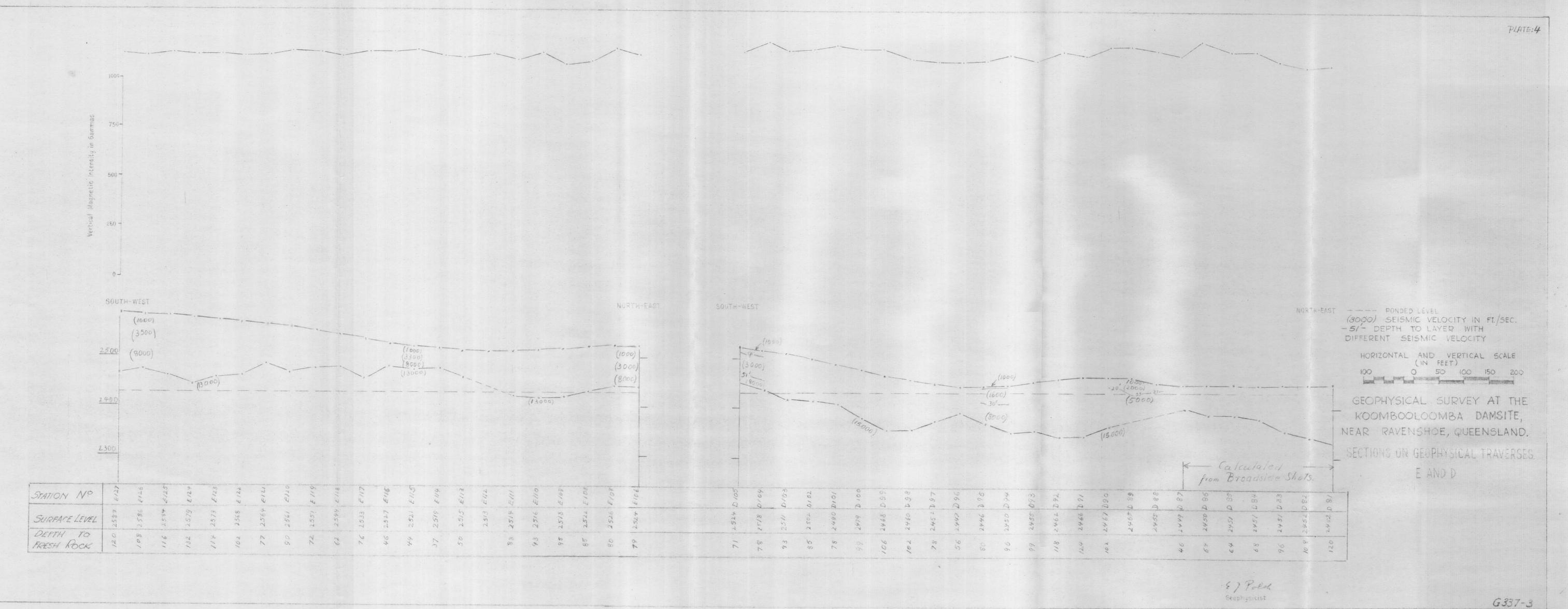
9 8	on	Distance shot to	True Iongitud-	Apparent velocity		Poisson's Ratio	Young's Modulus E		Rigidity Modulus G		Bulk Modulus B	
Traverse	Statio	geophone ft.	inal vel- ccity ft/sec.	ft/s Long.			10 <sup>6</sup> lb/in <sup>2</sup>	10"dynes/in <sup>2</sup>	10 <sup>6</sup> lb/in <sup>2</sup>	10"dynes/in <sup>2</sup>	1e <sup>6</sup> lb/in <sup>2</sup>	10"dynes/in <sup>2</sup>
A	1	1200	15000	14800	8900	.260	6.45	4.44	2.58	1.77	4.45	3.06
С	60	1950	16500	15600	8900	<b>.</b> 258	6.10	4.20	2.44	1.68	4.14	2.85
D	88	1350	15000	10800	6200	.265	6.40	4.41	2•55	1.76	4•54	3.13
· K	238	2300	15500	14000	810 <b>c</b>	•254	6.90	4.75	2.76	1.90	. 4.62	3.18
${f L}$	260 -	2800	20000	17000	9900	.250	11.60	7.99	4.64	3.19	7.65	5•27
0	332	1520	17000	15900	9100	.260	8.30	5.71	3.32	2.28	5.72	3.93
P	360	2900	18000	17300	9800	.265	9.00	6.20	3.60	2.48	6.39	4.40
x	478	1320	13000	11400	6400	-275	4.50	3.10	1.40	1.24	3.33	2.29
												4.



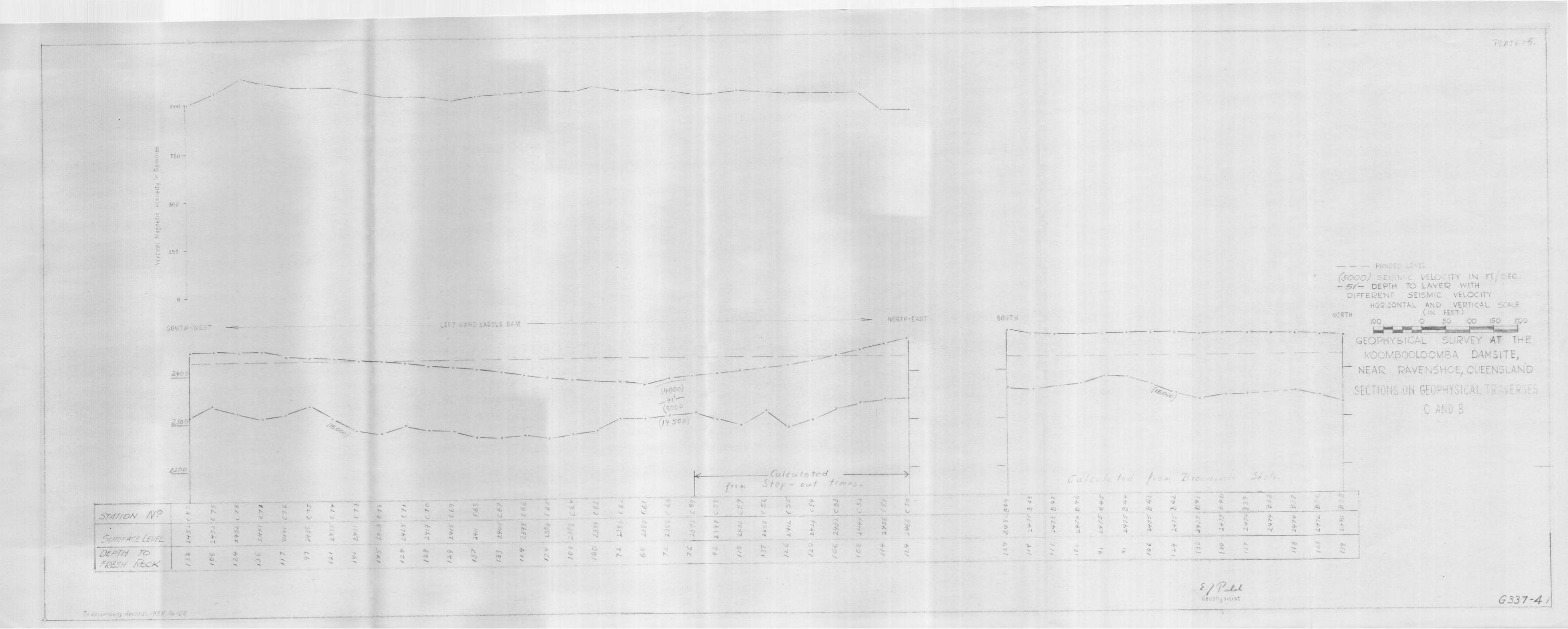


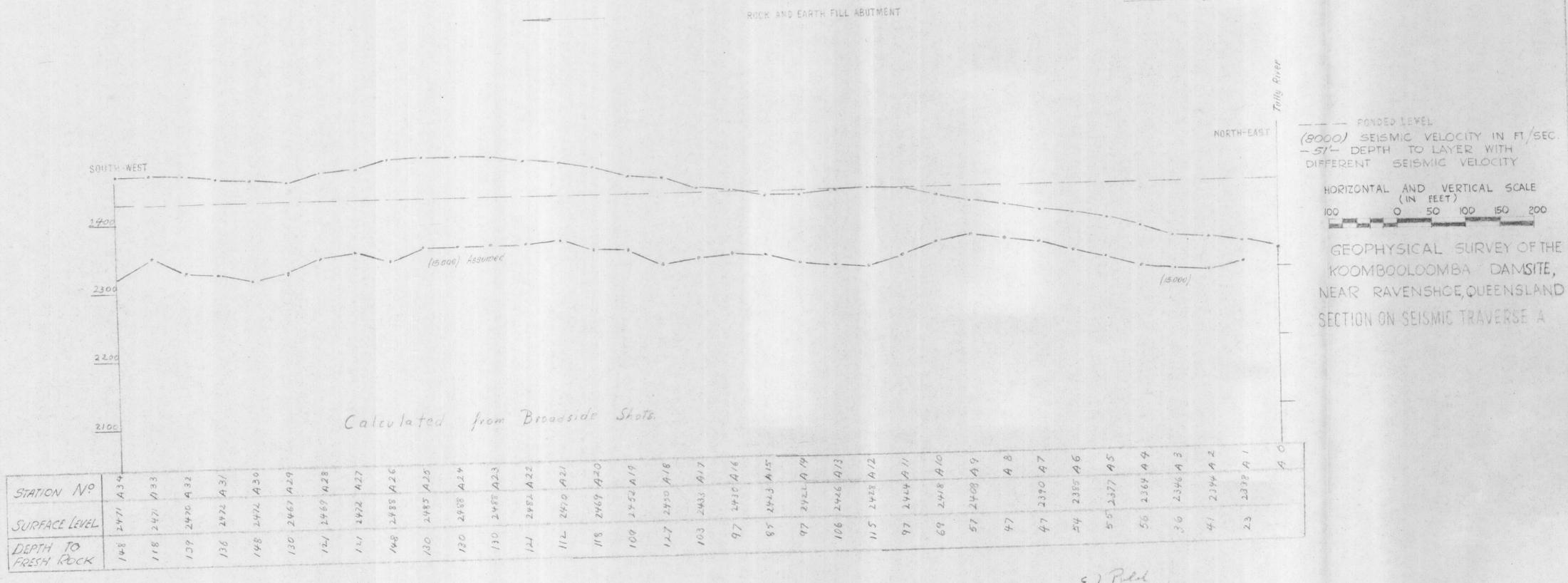


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