

REGIONAL GEOLOGY

The basin contains sediments ranging in age from Early Cretaceous to Late Tertiary (Brown, 1976). The Early Cretaceous Otway Group and the Late Cretaceous to Late Eocene Eastern View Coal Measures were deposited in a generally non-marine fluvio-deltaic environment (Nicholas et al, 1981). The Late Eocene to Oligocene Demons Bluff Formation was deposited during a marine transgression. Open marine conditions prevailed in Later Tertiary during the deposition of the Torquay Group.

EXPLORATION HISTORY

Previous to Pipipa-1, twenty wells had been drilled in the Bass Basin including two wells in the Torquay Embayment. Hematite Petroleum Pty. Ltd. has been exploring the Bass Basin since 1960. All wells until 1974 had been drilled by Esso Australia under a farm out agreement with Hematite. Since 1974 wells were drilled by Hematite at its sole risk. To date more than 18,000 km of seismic survey has been carried out over the basin.

Hydrocarbons have been recovered from four of the prospects drilled to date. The most significant being the Pelican structure where three of the four wells drilled recovered gas and condensate from thin sands in the Lower Eocene section of the Eastern View Coal Measures. The only oil show in the basin was recorded in Cormorant-1 from a thin sand in the Eocene. In Bass-3 a wireline test produced 29 cu ft of gas and 80 cc of condensate and in Aroo-1 wireline tests produced minor gas (1.9 cu ft) with formation water.