



ABSTRACT: The horizontal gradient of gravity anomalies map of Canada shows variations in the gravity field caused by lateral variations in the density of Earth's crust and upper mantle that reflect differences in composition and thickness. Systematic gravity mapping began in Canada in 1944 and is ongoing. All Canadian gravity data are tied to the International Gravity Standardization Network 1971 (IGSN71) to create a coherent dataset at the local scale. Local gravity anomalies result from the juxtaposition of relatively high- and low-density rock types. The horizontal gradient achieves local maxima over or near contacts between rock units with different density.

INTRODUCTION: This map presents the horizontal gradient magnitude of gravity anomalies. The data were compiled from the holdings of the Canadian Geodetic Survey, Survey General Branch. The data were collected to map the gravity field over the Canadian landmass and offshore areas. The gravity data are due to Earth's shape and differences in the mass of underlying materials. These data are useful for geological interpretation and have applications in oil, gas, and mineral exploration. The gravity field is also used to define the geoid, which is the ideal shape of Earth, or mean sea level if Earth were completely covered with water.

GRAVITY: Gravity is the combination of the gravitational attraction of Earth and its rotation (centrifugal force). Gravitation is the force of attraction one mass has for another. According to Newton's law of gravitation, the force increases with increasing mass. The force of attraction also increases as we approach the center of mass. If one geological body is denser than another, it will have a greater mass per unit volume and a greater gravitational attraction. Measurements of gravity yield little direct geological information, other than to represent Earth's oblate spheroidal shape, unless corrections are made to account for variations in Earth's shape and topography. As Earth's radius is approximately 20 km smaller at the poles than at the equator, the force of gravity increases as we get closer to the poles. In addition, Earth's rotation results in a slightly smaller measured gravity at the equator than at the poles. In order to isolate the effect of lateral variations in density within Earth, the bulk gravity effects of Earth due to latitude must be removed. The normal (theoretical) gravity (γ_n) is given in mGal (10^{-3} ms^{-2}) by the International Gravity Formula

$$\gamma_n = 9.7803251714 \left(1 + 5.3024 \times 10^{-5} \sin^2 \phi - 5.8 \times 10^{-6} \sin^4 \phi \right)$$

based on the Geodetic Reference System of 1980 (GRS80), where ϕ is the latitude in degrees of any point on Earth, x is the normal gravity at the equator ($= 9.7803251714 \text{ mGal}$), a is the semi-major axis ($= 6,378,137 \text{ m}$), f is the flattening ($= 0.00335281068118$), $m = 0.00344979000208$, and H is the elevation of the station. The effect of latitude is removed from an observed gravity value by subtracting the theoretical value of gravity, and the effect of variations in elevation is removed by subtracting the vertical gradient of gravity multiplied by the elevation of the station. The application of these corrections to the observed gravity produces the free-air gravity anomaly (Δg_{FA})

$$\Delta g_{FA} = g - \gamma_n + 2g_p H$$

where g is the observed gravity on Earth's surface.

To isolate the effects of lateral variations in density on gravity, it is also necessary to correct for the gravitational attraction of the slab of material between the observation point and the mean sea level. This is the Bouguer gravity anomaly (Δg_B), which is given in mGal for static land measurements by the formula

$$\Delta g_B = \Delta g_{FA} + 2\sigma H$$

where Δg_B is the free-air anomaly, G is the gravitational constant ($6.672 \times 10^{-11} \text{ m}^3 \text{ kg}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-2}$), ρ is the density of crustal rock (kg m^{-3}), and H is the elevation above mean sea level (m). In areas of rough terrain, a terrain correction (TC) for the effect of nearby masses above (mountains) or mass deficiencies below (valleys) the gravity measurement point can be calculated and applied to the Bouguer anomaly. The final Bouguer gravity anomaly reflects lateral variations in rock density.

DATA ACQUISITION: Gravity data are usually acquired using relative gravimeters that measure changes in gravity from one place to another. On the Canadian landmass, gravity has been measured using static gravimeters. Although measurements at some offshore stations have been taken using static gravimeters on the ocean floor, most were acquired using dynamic gravimeters aboard moving vessels. The relative nature of the gravimeters requires that the force of gravity be known at the start and end of a series of observations. The start and end points are referred to as "control stations" or "control stations". The control stations used in processing the data make up the Canadian Gravity Standardization Network (CGSN). These control stations have been established from the International Gravity Standardization Network 1971 (IGSN71). Gravimeter readings are converted to gravity observations by a least squares adjustment of the readings to the control stations.

PRESENTATION: The data used to compile this map consist of approximately 752,000 gravity observations, including 220,000 on land, acquired between 1944 and 2015. The data spacing ranges from less than 1 km to over 20 km, with an average spacing of 15 km. All measurements were reduced to the IGSN71 datum. Normal (theoretical) gravity values were calculated from the Geodetic Reference System 1980 (GRS80) gravity formula. Bouguer anomalies were calculated using the Bouguer anomaly equation described above using a crustal density of $2,670 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$. For this map, the data were gridded to a 2 km interval, with a binning radius of 20 km. The absolute value of the horizontal gradient magnitude was calculated from a cube generated from a least squares fit of a 5×5 array of grid cells centered on the calculation point. The filtered data enhance short-wavelength anomalies that correspond to near-surface density contrasts. The magnitude of the horizontal gradient reaches a maximum over contacts between bodies with contrasting densities. Corral (1979) showed that the magnitude reaches a local maximum directly over vertical contacts and is offset in the down-dip direction over dipping contacts. The colour image of the anomalies is combined with their shaded relief to accentuate the higher frequency data. The illustration has a declination of 135° and an inclination of 60° .

DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR FEATURES: The gravity anomalies correspond to variations in lateral density and mass in the upper mantle and the crust. Most high-frequency anomalies are caused by near-surface contacts of rocks that have significantly different densities. These anomalies are enhanced by the horizontal derivative filter. For example, in the Superior Province (Fig. 1), Wheeler et al., (1996) of the Canadian Shield, the east-west trending structural fabric is marked by east-west trending horizontal gradient anomalies over the contacts between low density plutonic rock and higher density volcanic rock. The boundary between the Trans-Hudson Orogen and the Superior Province (Goodacre, 1972) is marked by an extensive, curvilinear horizontal gradient high corresponding to the juxtaposition of denser material of the associated magmatic arcs with adjacent lower density plutonic rock, as well as differences in crustal thickness and density between the Superior and Churchill Provinces. Horizontal gradient maxima at the continental margins mark the transition between continental and oceanic crust. Large intrusive bodies having high density contrasts with host rock are imaged by horizontal gradient highs such as the anomaly at Sept-Îles, Québec (N 50° , W 60°).

This publication is available for free download through GEOSCAN (<http://www.geoscan.nrcan.gc.ca/>). Corresponding digital point and gridded data are available from Natural Resources Canada's Geospatial Data Repository for Geophysical Data at <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/geospatial/geophysical>. The same products are also available, for a fee, from the Geophysical Data Centre, Geological Survey of Canada, Room 580, 801 Booth Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E8. Telephone: 613-995-5326, email: NRCCanInfo@nrcan.gc.ca.

REFERENCES:
 Corral I (1979) Gravimetric expression of graben faulting in Santa Fe Country and the Española Basin, New Mexico. New Mexico Geological Society Guidebook, 30th Field Conference, p. 59-64.
 Goodacre AK (1972) Generalized structure of the deep crust and upper mantle in Canada. Journal of Geophysical Research, v. 77, p. 3145-3161.
 Wheeler JO, Hoffman PF, Card KD, Davidson A, Sanford DV, Ouellet AV, Roest WR (1996) Geological Map of Canada; Geological Survey of Canada, Map D1860A, scale 1:5,000,000.

DESCRIPTION DES ÉLÉMENTS IMPORTANTS: Les anomalies gravimétriques correspondent à des variations latérales de densité et à des différences de masse dans le manteau supérieur et dans la croûte. La plupart des anomalies de haute fréquence sont dues à la présence de contacts entre des roches de densités significativement différentes près de la surface. Ce type d'anomalie est renforcé par le filtre de la dérivée horizontale. Par exemple, dans la Province du lac Supérieur (Fig. 1), Wheeler et al. (1996) du Bouclier canadien, la fabrique structurale est-ouest est soulignée par des anomalies du gradient horizontal qui marquent la juxtaposition de roches plutoniques moins denses des secteurs environnants, ainsi qu'il y a des différences d'épaisseur et de densité de la croûte entre les provinces du lac Supérieur et du Churchill. Les valeurs maximales du gradient horizontal observées le long des marges continentales témoignent du passage de la croûte continentale à la croûte océanique. Les grands intrusifs qui affectent un contraste de densité marqué avec les roches environnantes sont soulignés de crêtes du gradient horizontal, comme c'est le cas de l'anomalie observée à Sept-Îles (Québec, située à 50° N , 60° W).

On peut télécharger cette publication gratuitement à partir de GEOSCAN (<http://www.geoscan.nrcan.gc.ca/>). Les données numériques correspondantes (données ponctuelles ou données griddées) sont disponibles depuis l'Entrepôt de données géospatiales pour les données géophysiques de Ressources naturelles Canada à l'adresse <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/geospatial/geophysical>. Les mêmes produits sont également disponibles, moyennant des frais, en s'adressant au Centre des données géophysiques de la Commission géologique du Canada, 801, rue Booth, pièce 580, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0E8. Téléphone : 613-995-5326; courriel : NRCCanInfo@nrcan.gc.ca.