

ISOSTATIC GRAVITY ANOMALY MAP OF CANADA

Descriptive Notes by A.K. Goodacre, R.A.F. Griève, and J.F. Halpenny

INTRODUCTION The regional mapping of the gravity field over Canada started in the late 1940s. It is now largely completed at a station spacing of 2 to 13 km, except for the mountainous areas in northern British Columbia, the Yukon Territory and parts of Ellesmere Island.

The Bouguer anomaly map is derived from this level in that it has been prepared at a scale of 1:100 000, which is a convenient desk-top size and, more importantly, does not involve the process of contouring. Instead, a particular colour is assigned to each cell depending upon the average gravity value at the corresponding geographic location.

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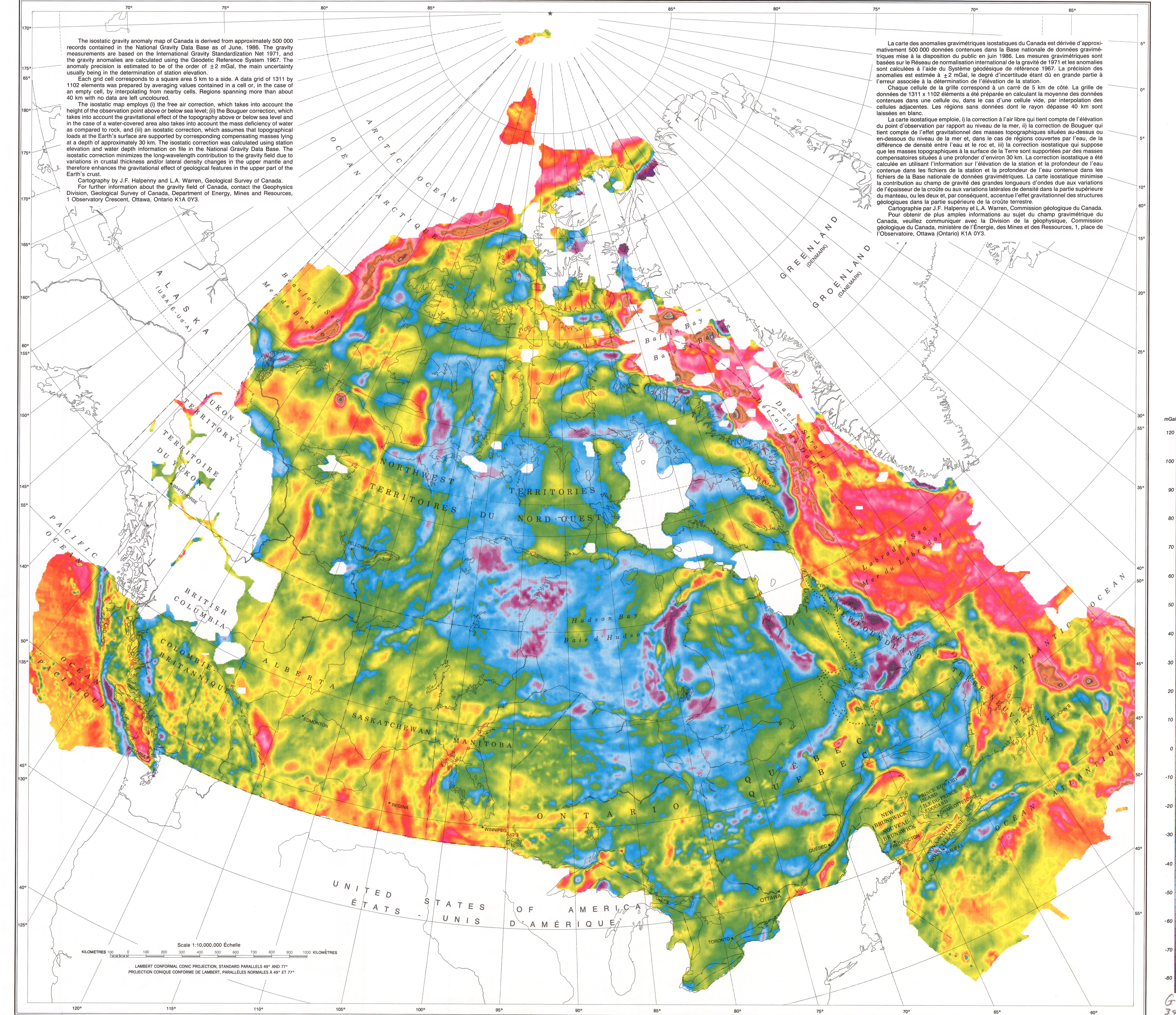
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CANADIAN GEOPHYSICAL ATLAS - MAP 4



The isostatic gravity anomaly map of Canada is derived from approximately 500 000 records contained in the National Gravity Data Base as of June, 1986. The gravity measurements are based on the International Gravity Standardization Net 1971, and the gravity anomalies are calculated using the Geodetic Reference System 1967. The anomaly precision is estimated to be of the order of ±2 mGal, the main uncertainty usually being in the determination of station elevation.

Each grid cell corresponds to a square area 5 km to a side. A data grid of 1311 by 1102 elements was prepared by averaging values contained in a cell or, in the case of an empty cell, by interpolating from nearby cells. Regions spanning more than about 40 km with no data are left uncoloured.

The isostatic map employs (i) the free air correction, which takes into account the height of the observation point above or below sea level; (ii) the Bouguer correction, which takes into account the gravitational effect of the topography above or below sea level and in the case of a water-covered area also takes into account the mass deficiency of water as compared to rock, and (iii) an isostatic correction, which assumes that topographical loads at the Earth's surface are supported by corresponding compensating masses lying at a depth of approximately 30 km. The isostatic correction was calculated using station elevation and water depth information on file in the National Gravity Data Base. The isostatic correction minimizes the long-wavelength contribution to the gravity field due to variations in crustal thickness and/or lateral density changes in the upper mantle and therefore enhances the gravitational effect of geological features in the upper part of the Earth's crust.

Cartography by J.F. Halpenny and L.A. Warren, Geological Survey of Canada. For further information about the gravity field of Canada, contact the Geophysics Division, Geological Survey of Canada, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, 1 Observatory Crescent, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y3.

La carte des anomalies gravimétriques isostatiques du Canada est dérivée d'environ 500 000 données contenues dans la Base nationale de données gravimétriques mise à la disposition du public en juin 1986. Les mesures gravimétriques sont basées sur le Réseau de normalisation internationale de la gravité de 1971 et les anomalies sont calculées à l'aide du Système géodésique de référence 1967. La précision des anomalies est estimée à ± 2 mGal, le degré d'incertitude étant dû en grande partie à l'erreur associée à la détermination de l'élevation de la station.

Chaque cellule de la grille correspond à un carré de 5 km de côté. La grille de données de 1311 x 1102 éléments a été préparée en calculant la moyenne des données contenues dans une cellule ou, dans le cas d'une cellule vide, par interpolation des cellules adjacentes. Les régions sans données dont le rayon dépassé 40 km sont laissées en blanc.

La carte isostatique emploie, (i) la correction à l'air libre qui tient compte de l'élevation du point d'observation par rapport au niveau de la mer, (ii) la correction de Bouguer qui prend en compte du niveau de la mer et, dans le cas de régions couvertes par l'eau, de la différence de densité entre l'eau et le roc et, (iii) la correction isostatique qui suppose que les masses topographiques au-dessus de la surface de la Terre sont supportées par des masses compensatoires situées à une profondeur d'environ 30 km. La correction isostatique a été calculée en utilisant l'information sur l'élevation de la station et la profondeur de l'eau contenue dans les fichiers de la station et la profondeur de l'eau contenue dans les fichiers de la Base nationale de données gravimétriques. La carte isostatique minimise la contribution au champ de gravité des grandes longueurs d'ondes due aux variations de l'épaisseur de la croûte ou aux variations latérales de densité dans la partie supérieure du manteau, ou les deux et, par conséquent, accentue l'effet gravitationnel des structures géologiques dans la partie supérieure de la croûte terrestre.

Cartographie par J.F. Halpenny et L.A. Warren, Commission géologique du Canada. Pour obtenir des renseignements supplémentaires au sujet du champ gravimétrique du Canada, veuillez communiquer avec la Division de la géophysique, Commission géologique du Canada, ministère de l'Énergie, des Mines et des Ressources, 1, place de l'Observatoire, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0Y3.

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Canadian geophysical atlas