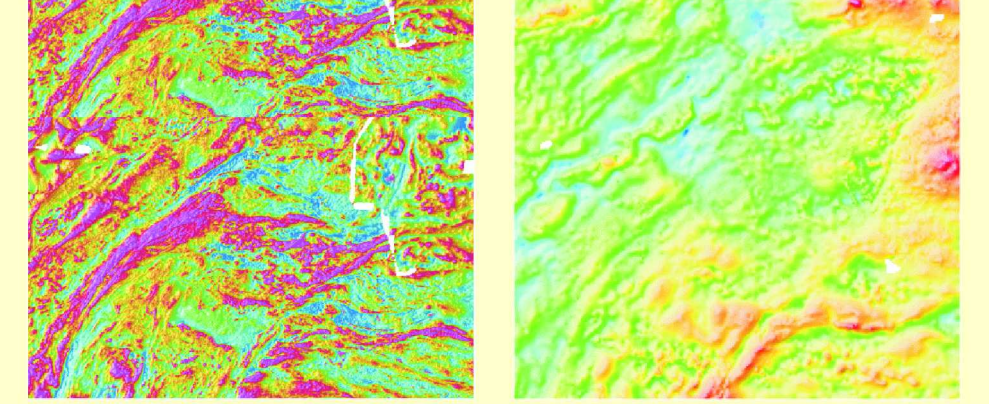


HORIZONTAL GRADIENT OF GRAVITY ANOMALIES MAP CARTE DES ANOMALIES DU GRADIENT HORIZONTAL DU CHAMP DE GRAVITÉ CANADA

SCALE 1:7 500 000 ÉCHELLE

LANBERT CONFORMAL CONIC PROJECTION
STANDARD PARALLELS 66° 00' N ET 67° 00' N
PROJECTION CONFORME CONIQUE DE LANBERT
PARALLÈLES D'ÉCHELLE CONSERVÉE À 66° ET 67°



ABSTRACT The horizontal gradient of gravity anomalies map of Canada shows variations in the gravity field caused by lateral variations in the density of the Earth's crust and upper mantle, and by variations in the composition and thickness. Systematic gravity mapping began in Canada in 1944 and is ongoing. All data cover the International Gravity Standardization Network 1971. Local gravity anomalies have been identified by juxtaposition of relatively high- and low-density rock types. The horizontal gradient achieves local maxima over near-orthogonal contacts and is a function of the dip of the contact. The horizontal gradient is a function of the dip of the contact and the lateral variation of density.

INTRODUCTION This map presents the horizontal gradient magnitude of Bouguer gravity anomalies on land and free-air gravity anomalies offshore. The data were corrected from the height of the Canadian Geodetic Reference System maintained by the Canadian Survey Division, Commission Géologique du Canada. The data were used to map the variation in gravitational attraction over the Canadian landmass and offshore areas. The data were used 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 shape of the Earth, or mean sea level if the Earth were completely covered with water.

GRAVITY Gravitation is the force of attraction one mass has for another. Gravity is the gravitational attraction of the Earth. According to Newton's law of gravitation, the force increases with increasing mass. The force of the 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 the Earth's overall spheroidal shape. Unless corrections are made to account for variations in the Earth's shape and topography, the force of gravity increases the closer we get to the poles. In addition, the Earth's rotation results in a slightly smaller measured gravity at the equator than near the poles. To isolate the effect of lateral variations in density with the Earth's surface, the Bouguer anomaly must be removed. The theoretical gravity g_{theor} in m/s^2 (10⁻³ ms⁻²) by the International Gravity Formula

$$g = 9.78031851(1 + 0.5272865 \sin^2 \phi) + 0.00023462 \sin^2 \phi$$

based on the 1987 Canadian Reference System, where ϕ is the latitude in degrees of any point on the Earth. The effect of latitude is removed by subtracting the theoretical value of g from the observed values. To correct for variations in elevation, the vertical gradient of gravity (vertical rate of change of the force of gravity) is 0.3086 mGal/m. It is multiplied by the elevation of the station and the result is added, producing the free-air anomaly. 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, which is given for static land measurements by the formula

$$BA = g - g_{theor} - 2.0 \rho_s h$$

where g = observed gravity (mGal), g_{theor} = theoretical gravity (mGal), g_{theor} = vertical gradient of gravity (0.3086 mGal/m), G = gravitational constant (6.672 x 10⁻¹¹ m³ kg⁻¹ s⁻² or 6.672 x 10⁻⁸ m³ kg⁻¹ s⁻²), ρ_s = density of rock (kg/m³), and h = elevation above mean sea level (m). In cases of rugged terrain, a correction for the effect of nearby masses above (positive) or mass deficiencies below (negative) the gravity measurement point can be calculated and applied. The free Bouguer gravity anomaly reflects lateral variations in rock density.

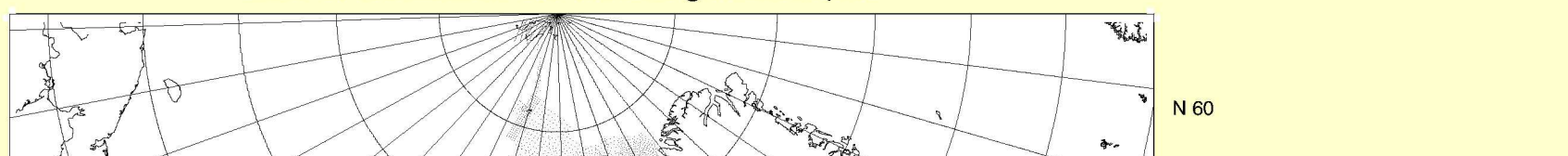
DATA ACQUISITION Gravity data are usually acquired using relative gravimeters that measure changes in gravity from one place to another. On the Canadian landmass, gravity has been measured at discrete stations using static gravimeters. Although measurements at some offshore stations have been taken using static gravimeters, the data 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 base stations or control stations. The control stations used in processing the data were 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 660 000 gravity observations, including 160 000 on land, acquired between 1944 and 1989. The data were spaced from less than 1 km to over 20 km, with an average spacing between 2 and 10 km. All measurements were reduced to the CGSN71 datum. Theoretical gravity values were calculated from the geoidetic reference system 1987 (IGSN71) gravity formula. Bouguer anomalies were calculated using a vertical gradient of 0.3086 mGal/m and a crustal density of 2.67 g/cm³. Areas of land not represented by Bouguer anomalies are marked as blank (white). The free-air anomaly is marked by a dashed line with a 2.0 mGal interval and a bearing radius of 20 km. The absolute value of the horizontal gradient magnitude was calculated from a sine gradient from the least squares fit of a 1 km of data at the observation point. The filtered data enhance short wavelength anomalies that correspond to near-surface density contrasts. The magnitude of the horizontal gradient is shown by contours between bodies with contrasting densities. Corbett (1979) showed that the magnitude reaches a local maximum directly over vertical contacts and is a function of the dip of the contact.

DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR FEATURES The gravity anomalies correspond to variations in lateral density and mass in the upper mantle and the crust. The high-frequency anomalies are caused by near-surface contacts of rocks that have significantly different densities. The anomalies are enhanced by the horizontal derivative filter. For example, the Hudson Bay Provinces (from Wheeler et al., 1996) of the Canadian Shield are east-west trending structures that are marked by east-west trending horizontal gradient anomalies over the contacts between low density plutonic rocks and higher density gneiss. The boundary between the Trans-Hudson Orogen and the Slave Craton is marked by a north-south trending horizontal gradient anomaly corresponding to the juxtaposition of dense mafic rocks with a lighter weight felsic gneiss. The Churchill Province, horizontal gradient maxima at the continental margins mark the transition between continental and oceanic crust. Large intensity maxima have high density contrasts with high rocks and are marked by horizontal gradient maxima such as the anomaly at Sagle Bay, Quebec (NSF, 1987). The grid of contour points data and copies of this map are available from the Geological Data Centre, Geological Survey of Canada, 115 Booth Street, Room 238, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E8. Telephone: (613) 993-5225; fax: (613) 992-8987; e-mail: info@geog.nrcan.gc.ca; WWW: http://geog.nrcan.gc.ca/geog/.

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Gravity Station Locations
Carte de localisation des stations gravimétriques



Recommended Citation:
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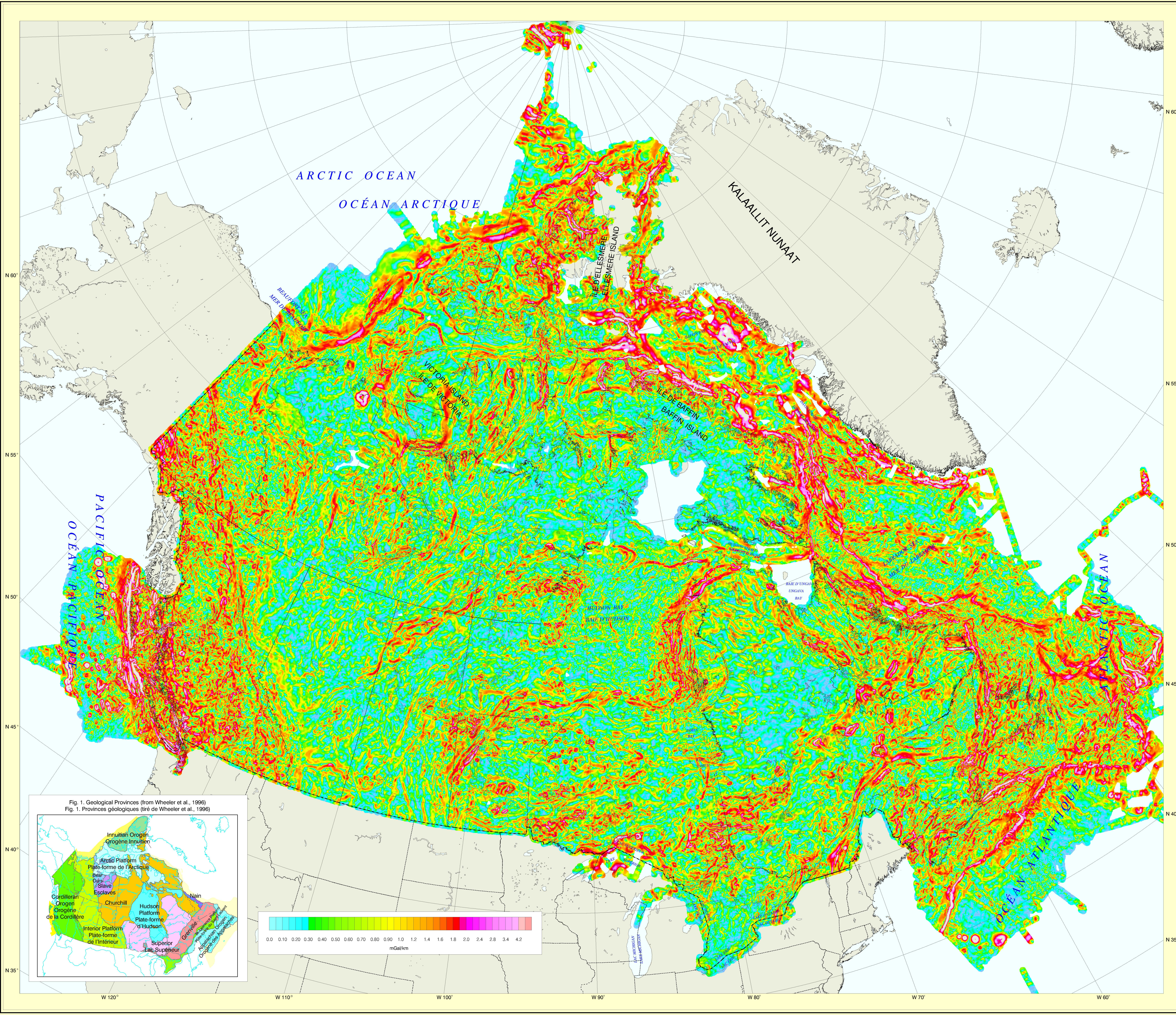


Fig. 1. Geological Provinces (from Wheeler et al., 1996)
Fig. 1. Provinces géologiques (tiré de Wheeler et al., 1996)

