



Introduction

A quantitative gamma-ray spectrometric and aeromagnetic airborne geophysical survey of the Northwestern Athabasca Basin, Saskatchewan, was completed by Goldak Airborne Surveys. The survey was conducted from June 20 to July 21, 2011, using two Pipistrelle aircraft (C-GJBA, C-GJBB) flying at a nominal altitude of 125 m in amperes between 200 and 220 kA rms. The survey lines were oriented 135° with orthogonal control lines. The flight path was recovered post-flight differential corrections to raw data recorded by the Global Positioning System.

Gamma-ray Spectrometric Data

The airborne gamma-ray measurements were made with a Radiation Solutions RS-500 gamma-ray spectrometer using fourteen 102x102x406 mm NaI (Tl) crystals. The main detector is composed of twelve crystals (total volume 50.4 liters). Two crystals have a volume of 8 liters, shielded by the main array, were used to detect variations in background radiation caused by atmospheric fluctuations. The thorium detector has one crystal and uses a different spectral window to measure the gain for each crystal.

Potassium is measured from the 1460 keV gamma photons emitted by decay chains of ^{40}K for potassium and ^{232}Th for thorium. Although these are far down their respective decay chains, they are assumed to be in equilibrium with their parent; thus gamma-ray spectrometric measurements of uranium and thorium are referred to as equivalent uranium and equivalent thorium, i.e. eU and eTh.

Gamma-ray spectra were recorded at 1-second intervals. Data processing followed standard procedures as described in IAEA, 1991 and IAEA, 2003. During processing, the spectra were corrected for count rate, and counts were converted into the window counts. Counts from the radon detectors were recorded in a 1600-1960 keV window and radiation at energies greater than 3000 keV was recorded in the cosmic window. The window counts were corrected for dead time, background activity from cosmic radiation, radon detector efficiency, and the energy calibration of the detector. The total air dose was calculated from the dose rate in nanograys per hour. Corrections for deviations from the planned terrain clearance and for variation of temperature and pressure were made prior to conversion to ground concentrations of potassium, uranium, and thorium, using factors determined from flights over the Daishan, Saskatchewan contour range. The factors for potassium, uranium, and thorium are listed in Table 1.

	C-GJBA	C-GJBB	C-GJDX
Potassium (cpm%)	83.27	82.05	95.75
Uranium (cpm%)	0.54	0.54	0.53
Thorium (cpm/pm)	5.61	5.45	8.57

Table 1 Gamma Ray Spectrometer Sensitivities for each aircraft

Corrected data from the 1460 keV window photons emitted by decay chains of ^{40}K for potassium and ^{232}Th for thorium, are assumed to be in equilibrium with their parent; thus gamma-ray spectrometric measurements of uranium and thorium are referred to as equivalent uranium and equivalent thorium, i.e. eU and eTh. The energy windows used to measure potassium, uranium, and thorium are:

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