DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Prepared in cooperation with the
DEFENSE MAPPING AGENCY

MISCELLANEOUS FIELD STUDIES
MAP MF–2097–A

Coastline from World Data Bank II, Tape 2, South America,
National Technical Information Service no. CIA/DF–77/002

Political boundaries are not necessarily authoritative

Lambert Azimuthal Equal Area projection
Central meridian 81.5° W
Latitude of central point 17° N

SCALE 1: 1 500 000

20 0 20 40 60 80 100 NAUTICAL MILES

20 0 20 40 60 80 100 KILOMETERS

MAP SHOWING FREE–AIR GRAVITY ANOMALIES IN PARTS OF THE WESTERN CARIBBEAN SEA

By

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EXPLANATION OF MAP SYMBOLS

- Free–air gravity contours; interval 10 mgal
- Area of decreasing gravity
- Ship trackline

INTRODUCTION

This map is one of two in a series presenting marine gravity data off the coasts of Venezuela and Trinidad–and–Tobago (Folger and others, 1990) and in the western Caribbean Sea (fig. 1). The data, collected by the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) in response to a request from the Defense Mapping Agency, are intended to improve gravity coverage where it has been insufficient or inadequate. The information shown on this map represents approximately 12,400 line kilometers of marine gravity data collected in the western Caribbean Sea and off the coasts of Jamaica, the Cayman Islands (United Kingdom) and Honduras, from October 25 to December 30, 1986.

METHODS

Data were collected aboard the Research Vessel (RV) *Starella*, a converted 73–m stern trawler owned and operated by J. Marr and Sons of Hull, England, under contract to the USGS. Nominal survey speed was 10 knots (18.5 km/hr). Two LaCoste and Romberg (L&R) Air–Sea Gravity Meters (S–26 and S–41) were operated continuously during the surveys. The dual metering provided immediate, or real–time, checks on meter performance and quality control on data collected. Both gravity meters were of standard beam–type configuration that included capacitance readouts, Lab. 6200A analog–to–digital converter boxes, and USGS computer processing and recording systems. Ten–second samples of L&R raw spring tension, average beam, and cross–coupling signals were logged and used to compute the raw digital gravity values. The raw digital gravity readings were filtered by three stages of lag–20–s resistive capacitance (RC) filtering in the instrument plus three stages of lead–20–s RC digital filtering. A 5–min symmetrical digital filter was applied in the computer processing. The standard auto–reader analog gravity readings provided a graphic check on the digital computations. All land gravity stations were on the International Gravity Standardization Net (IGSN) 1971 datum. Land gravity values were calibrated to the shipboard values at dockside using a L&R Model G Geodetic Gravity Meter (G–170).

All positions were computed in the World Gravity System (WGS)–84 datum and filtered in exactly the same manner as were the gravity signals. The primary means of navigation used during the cruise was a John Chance, Inc., STARFIX satellite navigation system, with Global Positioning System (GPS) as backup when available. Elements of a Magnavox S–5000 integrated navigation system were used to convey positioning information to the ship's bridge. STARFIX provided precision to about 5 m root mean square (RMS) and positional accuracy comparable to that obtained using GPS.

Data were recorded digitally on hard disk every 10 s and periodically were transferred to tape. Real–time 10–s digital plots of various system parameters were continuously logged. Plotted variables included time; STARFIX and GPS latitudes and longitudes, and their differences; Eotvos correction calculated from STARFIX and GPS fixes; raw and filtered gravity from both meters, and their differences; Eotvos–corrected gravity; ship's speed and direction; and gravity–platform heave and sway acceleration, which was needed to monitor sea–state effects on the gravity meters.

All parameters were monitored continuously by the watchstanders and party chief. With such data, problems with components of the system were readily identified and corrected; if corrections could not be made, traverse lines were rerun immediately. This real–time editing or recapture of data virtually eliminated data loss. Subsequent editing aboard the ship on an IBM–AT XENIX computer system provided gravity and navigation plots, and backup listings of time, positions, and Eotvos–corrected gravity. Line intersection points, crossing values, and statistics were routinely recorded and analyzed. For this cruise the statistics of the line–crossing differences were 2.2 mgal RMS (–4.7 minimum to +7.6 maximum). Base gravity readings taken before and after the cruise established the drift rate for the marine gravimeters (0.0 mgal in 57 days for S–26; +1.1 mgal in 28 days for S–41). This correction was applied to the data in the laboratory, where the tapes were reformatted, regional gravity field removed, and free–air gravity anomalies calculated. To improve the map, we merged data from Bowin and others (1982) with our data. This helped to smooth the contouring, especially near some of the long, linear islands. The resulting map enlarges the existing data base, which was sparse in shallow–water and nearshore areas in the western Caribbean (for example, see Bowin and others, 1982).

MAPPING TECHNIQUE

Eotvos–corrected gravity data (free–air values) were reduced to 6–min samples and gridded using a standard minimum–tension gridding technique. This procedure has two stages: initial estimate, and biharmonic iteration with scattered–data feedback. The initial estimate selects data points within a grid cell by their proximity to the grid node, and averages them using an inverse–distance weighting function that depends on the angular distance between points. Once averaged, the grid nodes are re–evaluated (second stage) using a biharmonic cubic spline function, which is followed by a scattered–data feedback procedure (Dynamic Graphics, Inc., 1988). The grid–cell size for this map is approximately 2800 m on a side. Contour lines are truncated along shore and at the seaward margins using zone blanking.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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REFERENCES CITED

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Dynamic Graphics, Inc., 1988, Interactive surface modeling: Berkeley, Calif., Release No. 8.03, 467 p.

Folger, D. W., Irwin, B. J., McCullough, J. R., Strahle, W. J., Bowin, C. O., and Polloni, C. F., 1990, Map showing free–air gravity anomalies off the coasts of Venezuela and Trinidad–and–Tobago: U.S. Geological Survey Miscellaneous Field Studies Map MF–2097–B, scale 1:1.5 million.

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Figure 1. – Map areas of the two published marine gravity surveys in this series.

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