

GEODETIC REFERENCE SYSTEM 1980

by H. Moritz

Corrigendum:

Due to some unfortunate error this article appeared wrongly in The Geodesists Handbook 1992 (Bulletin Geodesique, 66, 2, 1992). Among several errors a θ (polar distance) was interchanged with a Φ (geographical latitude) affecting the formulas for normal gravity. It is advised that you use the formulas here or in the Geodesists handbook from Bulletin Geodesique, Vol. 62, no. 3, 1988.

1- Definition

The **Geodetic Reference System 1980** has been adopted at the XVII General Assembly of the IUGG in Canberra, December 1979, by means of the following:

“RESOLUTION N° 7

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics

recognizing that the Geodetic Reference System 1967 adopted at the XIV General Assembly of IUGG, Lucerne, 1967, no longer represents the size, shape, and gravity field of the Earth to an accuracy adequate for many geodetic, geophysical, astronomical and hydrographic applications and

considering that more appropriate values are now available,

recommends

a) that the Geodetic Reference System 1967 be replaced by a new **Geodetic Reference System 1980**, also based on the theory of the geocentric equipotential ellipsoid, defined by the following conventional constants:

- equatorial radius of the Earth:

$$a = 6378\,137\text{ m,}$$

- geocentric gravitational constant of the Earth (including the atmosphere):

$$GM = 3986\,005 \times 10^8\text{ m}^3\text{ s}^{-2},$$

- dynamical form factor of the Earth, excluding the permanent tidal deformation:

$$J_2 = 108\,263 \times 10^{-8},$$

- angular velocity of the Earth:

$$\omega = 7292\,115 \times 10^{-11}\text{ rad s}^{-1},$$

b) that the same computational formulas, adopted at the XV General Assembly of IUGG in Moscow 1971 and published by IAG, be used as for Geodetic Reference System 1967, and

c) that the minor axis of the reference ellipsoid, defined above, be parallel to the direction defined by the Conventional International Origin, and that the primary meridian be parallel to the zero meridian of the BIH adopted longitudes”.

For the background of this resolution see the report of IAG Special Study Group 5.39 (Moritz, 1979, sec.2).c Also relevant is the following IAG resolution:

“RESOLUTION N° 1

The International Association of Geodesy

recognizing that the IUGG, at its XVII General Assembly, has introduced a new Geodetic Reference System 1980,

recommends that this system be used as an official reference for geodetic work, and

encourages computations of the gravity field both on the Earth’s surface and in outer space based on this system”.

2- The Equipotential Ellipsoid

According to the first resolution, the Geodetic Reference System 1980 is based on the theory of the equipotential

tential ellipsoid. This theory has already been the basis of the Geodetic Reference System 1967; we shall summarize (partly quoting literally) some principal facts from the relevant publication (IAG, 1971, Publ. Spéc. n° 3).

An equipotential ellipsoid or level ellipsoid is an ellipsoid that is defined to be an equipotential surface. If an ellipsoid of revolution (semimajor axis \mathbf{a} , semiminor axis \mathbf{b}) is given, then it can be made an equipotential surface

$$U = U_0 = \text{const.}$$

of a certain potential function U , called normal potential. This function U is uniquely determined by means of the ellipsoidal surface (semiaxes \mathbf{a} , \mathbf{b}), the enclosed mass M and the angular velocity ω , according to a theorem of Stokes-Poincaré, quite independently of the internal density distribution. Instead of the four constants \mathbf{a} , \mathbf{b} , M and ω , any other system of four independent parameters may be used as defining constants.

The theory of the equipotential ellipsoid was first given by **Pizzeti** in 1894; it was further elaborated by **Somigliana** in 1929. This theory had already served as a base for the International Gravity Formula adopted at the General Assembly in Stockholm in 1930.

Normal gravity $\gamma = |\text{grad } U|$ at the surface of the ellipsoid is given by the closed formula of **Somigliana**,

$$\gamma = \frac{a\gamma_e \cos^2 \Phi + b\gamma_p \sin^2 \Phi}{\sqrt{a^2 \cos^2 \Phi + b^2 \sin^2 \Phi}},$$

where the constants γ_e and γ_p denote normal gravity at the equator and at the poles, and Φ denotes geographical latitude.

The equipotential ellipsoid furnishes a simple, consistent and uniform reference system for all purposes of geodesy: the ellipsoid as a reference surface for geometric use, and a normal gravity field at the earth's surface and in space, defined in terms of closed formulas, as a reference for gravimetry and satellite geodesy.

The standard theory of the equipotential ellipsoid regards the normal gravitational potential as a harmonic function outside the ellipsoid, which implies the absence of an atmosphere. (The consideration of the atmosphere in the reference system would require an ad-hoc modification of the theory, whereby it would lose its clarity and simplicity.)

Thus, in the same way as in the Geodetic Reference System 1967, the computation are based on the theory of the equipotential ellipsoid without an atmosphere. The reference ellipsoid is defined to enclose the whole mass of the earth, including the atmosphere; as a visualization, one might, for instance, imagine the atmosphere to be condensed as a surface layer on the ellipsoid. The normal gravity field at the earth's surface and in space can thus be computed without any need for considering the variation of atmospheric density.

If atmospheric effects must be considered, this can be done by applying corrections to the measured values of gravity; for this purpose, a table of corrections will be given later (sec.5).

3- Computational Formulas

An equipotential ellipsoid of revolution is determined by four constants. The IUGG has chosen the following ones:

\mathbf{a}	equatorial radius,
\mathbf{GM}	geocentric gravitational constant,
\mathbf{J}_2	dynamical form factor,
ω	angular velocity.

The equatorial radius \mathbf{a} is the semimajor axis of the meridian ellipse; the semiminor axis will be denoted by \mathbf{b} . The geocentric gravitational constant \mathbf{GM} is the product of the Newtonian gravitational constant, \mathbf{G} , and the total mass of the earth, \mathbf{M} . The constant \mathbf{J}_2 is given by:

$$\mathbf{J}_2 = \frac{\mathbf{C} - \mathbf{A}}{\mathbf{M}\mathbf{a}^2},$$

where \mathbf{C} and \mathbf{A} are the principal moments of inertia of the level ellipsoid (\mathbf{C} ... polar, \mathbf{A} ... equatorial moment of inertia).

We shall also use the first excentricity \mathbf{e} , defined by:

$$\mathbf{e}^2 = \frac{\mathbf{a}^2 - \mathbf{b}^2}{\mathbf{a}^2},$$

and the second excentricity \mathbf{e}' , defined by:

$$\mathbf{e}'^2 = \frac{\mathbf{a}^2 - \mathbf{b}^2}{\mathbf{b}^2}$$

Closed computational formulas are given in sec.3 of (IAG, 1971, Pub.Spéc. n° 3); we shall here reproduce this section practically unchanged.

The derivation of these formulas is found in the book (**Heiskanen** and **Moritz**, 1967) sections 2-7 to 2-10. Reference to this book is by page number and number of equation.

Computation of \mathbf{e}^2

The fundamental derived constant is the square of the first excentricity, \mathbf{e}^2 , as defined above.

From p. 73, equations (2-90) and (2-92'), we find:

$$\mathbf{J}_2 = \frac{\mathbf{e}^2}{3} \left(1 - \frac{2}{15} \frac{\mathbf{m}\mathbf{e}'}{\mathbf{q}_0} \right)$$

This equation can be written as:

$$\mathbf{e}^2 = 3\mathbf{J}_2 + \frac{2\mathbf{m}\mathbf{e}'\mathbf{e}^2}{15\mathbf{q}_0}$$

with:

$$m = \frac{\omega^2 a^2 b}{GM}$$

(p. 69, eq. (2-70)) and with $be' = ae$ it becomes:

$$e^2 = 3J_2 + \frac{4}{15} \frac{\omega^2 a^3}{GM} \frac{a^3}{2q_0}$$

This is the basic equation which relates e^2 to the data a , GM , J_2 and ω . It is to be solved iteratively for e^2 , taking into account:

$$\begin{aligned} 2q_0 &= \left(1 + \frac{3}{e^2}\right) \arctan e' - \frac{3}{e'} \\ &= \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{4(-1)^{n+1} n}{(2n+1)(2n+3)} e'^{2n+1} \end{aligned}$$

with

$$e' = \frac{e}{\sqrt{1-e^2}} \quad (\text{second excentricity})$$

(p. 66, eq. (2-58), p. 72, second equation from top).

Geometric Constants

Now the other geometric constants of the reference ellipsoid can be computed by the well-known formulas:

$$\begin{aligned} b &= a\sqrt{1-e^2} \quad (\text{semiminor axis}), \\ f &= \frac{a-b}{a} \quad (\text{flattening}), \\ E &= \sqrt{a^2 - b^2} \quad (\text{linear excentricity}), \\ c &= \frac{a^2}{b} \quad (\text{polar radius of curvature}). \end{aligned}$$

The arc of meridian from equator to pole (meridian quadrant) is given by:

$$Q = c \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{d\Phi}{(1 + e^2 \cos^2 \Phi)^{3/2}}$$

where Φ is the geographical latitude. This integral can be evaluated by a series expansion:

$$Q = c \frac{\pi}{2} \left(1 - \frac{3}{4}e^2 + \frac{45}{64}e^4 - \frac{175}{256}e^6 + \frac{11025}{16384}e^8\right)$$

Various mean radii of ellipsoid are defined by the following formulas:

arithmetic mean:

$$R_1 = \frac{a+a+b}{3} = a \left(1 - \frac{f}{3}\right)$$

radius of sphere of the same surface:

$$\begin{aligned} R_2 &= c \left(\int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{\cos \Phi}{(1 + e^2 \cos^2 \Phi)^2} d\Phi \right)^{1/2} \\ &= c \left(1 - \frac{2}{3}e^2 + \frac{26}{45}e^4 - \frac{100}{189}e^6 + \frac{7034}{14175}e^8 \right) \end{aligned}$$

radius of sphere of the same volume:

$$R_3 = \sqrt[3]{a^2 b}.$$

Physical Constants

The reference ellipsoid is a surface of constant normal potential, $U = U_0$. This constant U_0 , the normal potential of the reference ellipsoid, is given by:

$$\begin{aligned} U_0 &= \frac{GM}{E} \arctan e' + \frac{1}{3} \omega^2 a^2 \\ &= \frac{GM}{b} \left(1 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (-1)^n \frac{e'^{2n}}{2n+1} + \frac{1}{3} m \right) \end{aligned}$$

(p. 67, eq. (2-61)).

The normal gravitational potential V (gravity potential U minus potential of centrifugal force) can be developed into a series of zonal spherical harmonics:

$$V = \frac{GM}{r} \left(1 - \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} J_{2n} \left(\frac{a}{r}\right)^{2n} P_{2n}(\cos \theta) \right);$$

where \mathbf{r} (radius vector) and θ (polar distance) are spherical coordinates. The coefficient J_2 is a defining constant; the other coefficients are expressed in terms of J_2 by:

$$J_{2n} = (-1)^{n+1} \frac{3e^{2n}}{(2n+1)(2n+3)} \left(1 - n + 5n \frac{J_2}{e^2} \right)$$

(p.73, eqs. (2-92) and (2-92')).

Normal gravity at the equator, γ_e , and normal gravity at the poles, γ_p , are given by the expressions:

$$\begin{aligned} \gamma_e &= \frac{GM}{ab} \left(1 - m - \frac{m e' q'_0}{6 q_0} \right) \\ \gamma_p &= \frac{GM}{a^2} \left(1 + \frac{m e' q'_0}{3 q_0} \right) \end{aligned}$$

with

$$q'_0 = 3 \left(1 + \frac{1}{e^2} \right) \left(1 - \frac{1}{e'} \arctan e' \right) - 1$$

and

$$m = \frac{\omega^2 a^2 b}{GM}$$

(p. 69, eqs. (2-73) and (2-74); p.68, eq. (2-67)).

The constant:

$$f^* = \frac{\gamma_p - \gamma_e}{\gamma_e} \quad (\text{gravity flattening})$$

is also needed.

A check is provided by the closed form of **Clairaut's** theorem for the equipotential ellipsoid:

$$f + f^* = \frac{\omega^2 b}{\gamma_e} \left(1 + \frac{e' q'_0}{2q_0} \right)$$

(p. 69, eq. (2-75)).

The Gravity Formula

Somigliana's closed formula for normal gravity is

$$\gamma = \frac{a\gamma_e \cos^2 \Phi + b\gamma_p \sin^2 \Phi}{\sqrt{a^2 \cos^2 \Phi + b^2 \sin^2 \Phi}}$$

For numerical computations, the form

$$\gamma = \gamma_e \frac{1 + k \sin^2 \Phi}{\sqrt{1 - e^2 \sin^2 \Phi}}$$

with

$$k = \frac{b\gamma_p}{a\gamma_e} - 1$$

is more convenient.

The conventional abbreviated series expansion is:

$$\gamma = \gamma_e \left(1 + f^* \sin^2 \Phi - \frac{1}{4} f_4 \sin^2 2\Phi \right)$$

with

$$f_4 = \frac{1}{2} f^2 + \frac{5}{2} f m$$

(p.77, eqs. (2-115) and (2-116)).

More generally, the above closed formula for normal gravity may be expanded into the series

$$\gamma = \gamma_e \left(1 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} a_{2n} \sin^{2n} \Phi \right)$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} a_2 &= \frac{1}{2} e^2 + k, & a_6 &= \frac{5}{16} e^6 + \frac{3}{8} e^4 k, \\ a_4 &= \frac{3}{8} e^4 + \frac{1}{2} e^2 k, & a_8 &= \frac{35}{128} e^8 + \frac{5}{16} e^6 k, \end{aligned}$$

The average value of gravity over the ellipsoid is

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{\gamma} &= \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{\gamma \cos \Phi d\Phi}{(1 - e^2 \sin^2 \Phi)^2} : \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{\cos \Phi d\Phi}{(1 - e^2 \sin^2 \Phi)^2} \\ &= 1 + \frac{1}{6} e^2 + \frac{1}{3} k + \frac{59}{360} e^4 + \frac{5}{18} e^2 k \\ &\quad + \frac{2371}{15120} e^6 + \frac{259}{1080} e^4 k + \frac{270229}{1814400} e^8 + \frac{9623}{45360} e^6 k. \end{aligned}$$

4- Numerical Values

The following derived constants are accurate to the number of decimal places given. In case of doubt or in those cases where a higher accuracy is required, these quantities are to be computed from the defining constants by means of the closed formulas given in the preceding section.

Defining Constants (exact)

a = 6378 137 m	semimajor axis
GM = 3 986 005 × 10 ⁸ m ³ s ⁻²	geocentric gravitational constant
J ₂ = 108 263 × 10 ⁻⁸	dynamic form factor
ω = 7 292 115 × 10 ⁻¹¹ rad s ⁻¹	angular velocity

Derived Geometric Constants

b = 6 356 752.3141 m	semiminor axis
E = 521 854.0097 m	linear excentricity
c = 6 399 593.6259 m	polar radius of curvature
e ² = 0.006 694 380 022 90	first excentricity (e)
e' ² = 0.006 739 496 775 48	second excentricity (e')
f = 0.003 352 810 681 18	flattening
f ⁻¹ = 298.257 222 101	reciprocal flattening
Q = 10 001 965.7293 m	meridian quadrant
R ₁ = 6 371 008.7714 m	mean radius
R ₁ = (2a + b)/3	
R ₂ = 6 371 007.1810 m	radius of sphere of same surface
R ₃ = 6 371 000.7900 m	radius of sphere of same volume

Derived Physical Constants

U ₀ = 6 263 686.0850 × 10 m ² s ⁻²	normal potential at ellipsoid
J ₄ = -0.000 002 370 912 22	
J ₆ = 0.000 000 006 083 47	spherical-harmonic coefficients
J ₈ = -0.000 000 000 014 27	
m = 0.003 449 786 003 08	m = γ ² a ² b/GM
γ _e = 9.780 326 7715 ms ⁻²	normal gravity at equator
γ _p = 9.832 186 3685 ms ⁻²	normal gravity at pole
f* = 0.005 302 440 112	f* = $\frac{(g_p - g_e)}{g_e}$
k = 0.001 931 851 353	f k* = $\frac{(b g_p - a g_e)}{a g_e}$

Gravity Formula 1980

Normal gravity may be computed by means of the closed formula:

$$\gamma = \gamma_e \frac{1 + k \sin^2 \Phi}{\sqrt{1 - e^2 \sin^2 \Phi}},$$

with the values of γ_e , k , and e^2 shown above.

The series expansion, given at the end of sec. 3, becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} \gamma = \gamma_e & (1 + 0.005\,279\,0414 \sin^2 \Phi \\ & + 0.000\,023\,2718 \sin^4 \Phi \\ & + 0.000\,000\,1262 \sin^6 \Phi \\ & + 0.000\,000\,0007 \sin^8 \Phi); \end{aligned}$$

it has a relative error of 10^{-10} , corresponding to $10^{-3} \mu\text{m s}^{-2} = 10^{-4} \text{mgal}$.

The conventional series

$$\begin{aligned} \gamma = \gamma_e & (1 + f^* \sin^2 \Phi - \frac{1}{4} f_4 \sin^2 2\Phi) \\ = 9.780\,327 & (1 + 0.005\,3024 \sin^2 \Phi \\ & - 0.000\,0058 \sin^2 2\Phi) \text{m s}^{-2} \end{aligned}$$

has only an accuracy of $1 \mu\text{m s}^{-2} = 0.1 \text{mgal}$. It can, however, be used for converting gravity anomalies from the International Gravity Formula (1930) to the Gravity Formula 1980:

$$\gamma_{1980} - \gamma_{1930} = (-16.3 + 13.7 \sin^2 \Phi) \text{mgal},$$

where the main part comes from a change of the Postdam reference value by -14mgal ; see also (IAG, 1971, Publ. Spéc. n° 3, p.74).

For the conversion from the Gravity Formula 1967 to the Gravity Formula 1980, a more accurate formula, corresponding to the precise expansion given above, is:

$$\begin{aligned} \gamma_{1980} - \gamma_{1967} = & (0.8316 + 0.0782 \sin^2 \Phi \\ & - 0.0007 \sin^4 \Phi) \text{mgal}, \end{aligned}$$

Since former gravity values are expressed in the units “gal” and “mgal”, we have, in the conversion formulas, used the unit $1 \text{mgal} = 10^{-5} \text{m s}^{-2}$.

Mean values of normal gravity are:

$$\bar{\gamma} = 9.797\,644\,656 \text{ m s}^{-2} \text{ average over ellipsoid,}$$

$$\gamma_{45} = 9.806\,199\,203 \text{ m s}^{-2} \gamma$$

at latitude $\Phi = 45^\circ$.

The numerical values given in this section have been computed independently by **Mr. Chung-Yung Chen**,

using series developments up to f^5 , and by **Dr. Hans-Sünkel**, using the formulas presented in sec. 3.

5- Atmospheric Effects

The table given here is reproduced from (IAG, 1971, Publ. Spéc. n° 3, p.72). It shows atmospheric gravity correction δg as a function of elevation h above sea level. The values δg are to be added to measured gravity. The effect of this reduction is to remove, by computation, the atmosphere outside the Earth by shifting it vertically into the interior of the geoid.

Atmospheric Gravity Corrections δg (to be added to measured gravity)			
h [km]	δg [mgal]	h [km]	δg [mgal]
0	0.87	10	0.23
0.5	0.82	11	0.20
1.0	0.77	12	0.17
1.5	0.73	13	0.14
2.0	0.68	14	0.12
2.5	0.64	15	0.10
3.0	0.60	16	0.09
3.5	0.57	17	0.08
4.0	0.53	18	0.06
4.5	0.50	19	0.05
5.0	0.47	20	0.05
5.5	0.44	22	0.03
6.0	0.41	24	0.02
6.5	0.38	26	0.02
7.0	0.36	28	0.01
7.5	0.33	30	0.01
8.0	0.31	32	0.01
8.5	0.29	34	0.00
9.0	0.27	37	0.00
9.5	0.25	40	0.00

6- Origin and Orientation of the Reference System

IUGG Resolution n° 7, quoted at the beginning of this paper, specifies that the Geodetic Reference System 1980 be geocentric, that is, that its origin be the center of mass of the earth. Thus, the center of the ellipsoid coincides with the geocenter.

The orientation of the system is specified in the following way. The rotation axis of the reference ellipsoid is to have the direction of the Conventional International Origin for the Polar Motion (**CIO**), and the zero meridian as defined by the Bureau International de l'Heure (**BIH**) is used.

To this definition there corresponds a rectangular coordinate system **XYZ** whose origin is the geocenter, whose **Z**-axis is the rotation axis of the reference ellipsoid, defined by the direction of **CIO**, and whose **X**-axis passes through the zero meridian according to the **BIH**.

References

W.A. HEISKANEN, and H. MORITZ (1967): Physical Geodesy. W.H. Freeman, San Francisco.

International Association of Geodesy (1971): Geodetic Reference System 1967. Publi. Spéc. n° 3 du Bulletin Géodésique, Paris.

H. MORITZ (1979): Report of Special Study Group N° 539 of I.A.G., Fundamental Geodetic Constants, presented at XVII General Assembly of I.U.G.G., Canberra.

Editor's Note:

Additional useful constants can be obtained from:

“United States Naval Observatory, Circular N° 167, December 27, 1983, Project MERIT Standards”, with updates of December 1985.

Parameters of Common Relevance of Astronomy, Geodesy, and Geodynamics

By E. Groten (President of IAG Sub-commission 3)

At present, systems of fundamental constants are in a state of transition. Even though the uncertainties of many constants have substantially decreased, the numerical values themselves did not substantially change. On the other hand, relativistic reductions and corrections underwent a variety of substantial revisions that, however, did not yet find final agreement within the scientific working groups of international committees in charge of evaluating relevant quantities and theories. Consequently, substantial changes and revisions still have to be expected in IAU, IERS, IUGG etc. within the next few years.

Therefore SC 3, after lengthy discussions and considerations, decided not to propose, at this time, any change of existing geodetic reference systems such as WGS 84 (in its recent form updated by NIMA, 1997) and GRS 80. This would only make sense in view of relatively small numerical changes which would not justify, at this moment, complete changes of systems and would rather produce more confusion within user communities – as soon as working groups within IAU, IERS etc. have made up their minds concerning the background of new systems and will be prepared to discuss new numerical values. This should be around the year 2001.

The present situation is also reflected by the fact that in view of substantial progress in evaluating temporal changes of fundamental “constants” and related accuracies, we should better speak about “fundamental parameters” instead of “fundamental constants”; however, the majority of members of SC 3 preferred to preserve the traditional name of SC 3.

In view of this situation and of the fact that IERS in its “conventions” which are edited at regular intervals SC 3 cannot and should not act independently in proposing changes of fundamental parameters, – there will consequently be relatively small changes in the following part on “current best estimates” and only minimal

changes in the part on “official numerical values” within this report. It is, moreover, proposed to strengthen the interrelations between IERS and SC 3.

Interrelations between IERS, IAU, IAG etc. make it, however, more difficult to implement necessary changes in fundamental systems. This was particularly realized in discussing adoption of new fundamental constants. This fact may be explained by the discussion of small changes inherent in the adoption of particular tidal corrections which became relevant in view of higher accuracies of $\pm 10^{-8}$ or $\pm 10^{-9}$. It turns out to be almost impossible to explain to other scientific bodies the modern relevance of the dependence of the numerical value of the semi-major axis “a” of the *Earth* on specific tidal corrections. Other temporal variations imply similar difficulties.

From the view point of SC 3, i.e. in deriving fundamental parameters, it is, to some extent, confusing that a variety of global or/and regional systems exist; it would be best to use only one global terrestrial and one celestial system such as ITRF, referred to a specific epoch, and an associated celestial system, unless precise transition and transformation formulae are available such as those between ETRF, ITRF, EUREF, and perhaps WGS 84 (in updated form), IGS, GRS 80 etc. where IERS-systems, in general, could serve to maintain transformation accuracy and precision.

However, the consequent replacement of “a” by a quantity such as the geopotential at the geoid W_0 (which is independent of tides) in a geodetic reference system (or a similar system) was not well understood and not supported by other working groups so that we finally gave up the idea of a reformation of systems of fundamental constants in this way even though quantities such as W_0 are now very precisely determined by satellite altimetry etc. Whether seasonal variations (BURSA et al. 1998a) of W_0 are significant or not is still an open question, when expressed in $R_0 = GM/W_0$ they amount to a few centimeters in global radius.

I Current (1999) best estimates of the parameters of common relevance to astronomy, geodesy, and geodynamics

SI units are used throughout (except for the TDB-value (value below (4)) (SI-value can be associated with TCB or TCG))

– velocity of light in vacuum
 $c = 299\,792\,458\text{ m s}^{-1}$ (1)

– Newtonian gravitational constant
 $G = (6\,672.59 \pm 0.30) \times 10^{-14}\text{ m}^3\text{ s}^{-2}\text{ kg}^{-1}$ (2)

– Geocentric gravitational constant (including the mass of the Earth's atmosphere); reconfirmed by J. RIES (1998, priv. comm.)
 $GM = (398\,600\,441.8 \pm 0.8) \times 10^6\text{ m}^3\text{ s}^{-2}$ (3)

For the new EGM 96 global gravity model
 $GM = 398\,600\,441.5 \times 10^6\text{ m}^3\text{ s}^{-2}$ was adopted.

In TT units (Terrestrial Time) the value is

$$GM = (398\,600\,441.5 \pm 0.8) \times 10^6\text{ m}^3\text{ s}^{-2}.$$

Note that if expressed in old TDB units (solar system Barycentric Dynamical Time), the value is

$$GM = 398\,600\,435.6 \times 10^6\text{ m}^3\text{ s}^{-2}.$$

Based on well known transformation formulas we may relate GM in SI-units to TT/TCG/TCB; see IERS-Convention 1996 p. 85. The well known secular term was not originally included in the GM(E)-analysis, therefore it was related to TT, neither to SI nor (TCG, TCB); as still satellite analysis occurs without the secular term, GM(E) in TT is still of geodetic interest; GM(E) = GM of the Earth.

– Mean angular velocity of the Earth's rotation

$$\omega = 7\,292\,115 \times 10^{-11}\text{ rad s}^{-1}. \quad (5)$$

Table 1. Mean angular velocity of the Earth's rotation 1978–1994

Year	ω [10^{-11} rad s^{-1}]	Year	ω [10^{-11} rad s^{-1}]	DLOD [ms]
Min: 1978	7 292 114.903	1994	7.292 114.964	2.17
Max: 1986	292 115.043	1995	.952	2.31
		1996	.992	1.83
		1997	.991	1.84
		1998	–	–

– Long-term variation in ω

$$\frac{d\omega}{dt} = (-4.5 \pm 0.1) \times 10^{-22}\text{ rad s}^{-2}. \quad (6)$$

This observed average value is based on two actual components:

a) due to tidal dissipation

$$\left(\frac{d\omega}{dt}\right)_{\text{tidal}} = (-6.1 \pm 0.4) \times 10^{-22}\text{ rad s}^{-2}. \quad (7)$$

This value is commensurate with a tidal deceleration in the mean motion of the Moon n

$$\frac{dn}{dt} = (-25.88 \pm 0.5)\text{ arc sec cy}^{-2}. \quad (8)$$

b) non-tidal in origin

$$\left(\frac{d\omega}{dt}\right)_{\text{non-tidal}} = (+1.6 \pm 0.4) \times 10^{-22}\text{ rad s}^{-2}. \quad (9)$$

– Second-degree zonal geopotential (Stokes) parameter (tide-free, conventional, not normalized, Love number $k_2 = 0.3$ adopted)

$$J_2 = (1082\,626.7 \pm 0.1) \times 10^{-9} \quad (10)$$

To be consistent with the I.A.G. General Assembly Resolution 16, 1983 (Hamburg), the indirect tidal effect on J_2 should be included: then in the zero-frequency tide system

$$J_2 = (1082\,635.9 \pm 0.1) \times 10^{-9}. \quad (11)$$

Table 2. The Stokes second-degree zonal parameter; marked with a bar: fully normalized; $k_2 = 0.3$ adopted for the tide-free system

Geopotential model	Zero-frequency tide system		Tide-free	
	\bar{J}_2 [10^{-6}]	J_2 [10^{-6}]	\bar{J}_2 [10^{-6}]	J_2 [10^{-6}]
JGM-3	484.16951	1082.6359	484.16537	1082.6267
EGM 96			484.16537	

– Long-term variation in J_2

$$\frac{dJ_2}{dt} = -(2.6 \pm 0.3) \times 10^{-9}\text{ cy}^{-1} \quad (12)$$

– second-degree sectorial geopotential (Stokes) parameters (conventional, not normalized, geopotential model JGM-3)

$$J_2^2 = (1574.5 \pm 0.7) \times 10^{-9}, \quad (13)$$

$$S_2^2 = -(903.9 \pm 0.7) \times 10^{-9}, \quad (14)$$

$$J_{2,2} = \left[(J_2^2) + (S_2^2) \right]^{1/2} = (1815.5 \pm 0.9) \times 10^{-9}. \quad (15)$$

Table 3. The Stokes second-degree sectorial parameters; marked with a bar: fully normalized

Geopotential model	\bar{C}_2^2 [10^{-6}]	\bar{S}_2^2 [10^{-6}]
JGM-3	2.43926	-1.40027
EGM 96	2.43914	-1.40017

Only the last decimal is affected by the standard deviation.

For EGM 96 MARCHENKO and ABRIKOSOV (1999) found more detailed values:

Table 4. Parameters of the linear model of the potential of 2nd degree

Harmonic coefficient	Value of coefficient $\times 10^6$	Temporal variation $\times 10^{11}$ [yr $^{-1}$]
$\bar{C}_{20} = -\bar{J}_2$	-484.165371736	1.16275534
\bar{C}_{21}	-0.00018698764	-0.32
\bar{S}_{21}	0.00119528012	1.62
$\bar{C}_{22} = -\bar{J}_2^2$	2.43914352398	-0.494731439
\bar{S}_{22}	-1.40016683654	-0.203385232

Coefficient H associated with the precession constant

$$H = \frac{C - \frac{1}{2}(A + B)}{C} = (3\ 273\ 763 \pm 20) \times 10^{-9}. \quad (16)$$

The geoidal potential W_0 and the geopotential scale factor $R_0 = GM/W_0$ recently derived by BURSA et al. (1998) read

$$W_0 = (62\ 636\ 855.611 \pm 0.5) \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2}, \quad (17)$$

$$R_0 = (6\ 363\ 672.58 \pm 0.05) \text{ m}.$$

$W_0 = (62636856.4 \pm 0.5) \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2}$ J. Ries (priv. comm, 1998) found globally.

If W_0 is preserved as a primary constant the discussion of the ellipsoidal parameters could become obsolete; as the Earth ellipsoid is basically an artefact. Modelling of the altimeter bias and various other error influences affect the validity of W_0 -determination. The variability of W_0 and R_0 was studied by Bursa (BURSA et al. 1998) recently; they detected interannual variations of W_0 and R_0 amounting to 2 cm.

The relativistic corrections to W_0 were discussed by KOPEJKIN (1991); see his formulas (67) and (77) where tidal corrections were included. Whereas he proposes average time values, Grafarend insists in corrections related to specific epochs in order to illustrate the time-dependence of such parameters as W_0 , GM, J_n , which are usually, in view of present accuracies, still treated as constants in contemporary literature.

Based on recent GPS data, E. GRAFAREND and A. ARDALAN (1997) found locally (in the Finnish Datum for Fennoscandia): $W_0 = (6\ 263\ 685.58 \pm 0.36) \text{ kgal m}$. The temporal variations were discussed by WANG and KAKKURI (1998), in general terms.

– Mean equatorial gravity in the zero-frequency tide system

$$g_e = (978\ 032.78 \pm 0.2) \times 10^{-5} \text{ m s}^{-2}. \quad (18)$$

– Equatorial radius of the Reference Ellipsoid (mean equatorial radius of the Earth) in the zero-frequency tide system (BURSA et al. 1998)

$$a = (6\ 378\ 136.62 \pm 0.10) \text{ m}. \quad (19)$$

– The corresponding value in the mean tide system (the zero-frequency direct and indirect tidal distortion included) comes out as

$$a = (6\ 378\ 136.72 \pm 0.10) \text{ m} \quad (20)$$

and the tide-free value

$$a = (6\ 378\ 136.59 \pm 0.10) \text{ m}. \quad (21)$$

The tide free-value adopted for the new EGM-96 gravity model reads $a = 6\ 378\ 136.3 \text{ m}$.

– Polar flattening computed in the zero-frequency tide system, (adopted GM, ω , and J_2 in the zero-frequency tide system)

$$1/f = 298.25642 \pm 0.00001 \quad (22)$$

The corresponding value in the mean tide system comes out as

$$1/f = 298.25231 \pm 0.00001 \quad (23)$$

and the tide-free

$$1/f = 298.25765 \pm 0.00001 \quad (24)$$

– Equatorial flattening (geopotential model JGM-3).

$$1/\alpha_1 = 91026 \pm 10. \quad (25)$$

– Longitude of major axis of equatorial ellipse, geopotential model JGM-3

$$\Lambda_a = (14.9291^\circ \pm 0.0010^\circ) \text{ W}. \quad (26)$$

In view of the small changes (see Table 3) of the second degree tesserals it is close to the value of EGM 96. We may raise the question whether we should keep the reference ellipsoid in terms of GRS 80 (or an alternative) fixed and focus on W_0 as a parameter to be essentially better determined by satellite altimetry, where however the underlying concept (inverted barometer, altimeter bias etc.) has to be clarified.

Table 5. Equatorial flattening α_1 and Λ_a of major axis of equatorial ellipse

Geopotential Model	$\frac{1}{\alpha_1}$	Λ_a [deg]
JGM-3	91026	14.9291 W

– Coefficient in potential of centrifugal force

$$q = \frac{\omega^2 a^3}{GM} = (3\ 461\ 391 \pm 2) \times 10^{-9}. \quad (27)$$

Computed by using values (3), (5) and $a = 6\ 378\ 136.6$

– Principal moments of inertia (zero-frequency tide system), computed using values (11), (15), (3), (2) and (16)

$$\frac{C - A}{Ma_0^2} = J_2 + 2J_{2,2} = (1086 \cdot 267 \pm 0.001) \times 10^{-6}, \quad (28)$$

$$\frac{C - B}{Ma_0^2} = J_2 - 2J_{2,2} = (1079.005 \pm 0.001) \times 10^{-6},$$

$$\frac{B - A}{Ma_0^2} = 4J_{2,2} = (7.262 \pm 0.004) \times 10^{-6};$$

$$Ma_0^2 = \frac{GM}{G} a_0^2 = (2.43014 \pm 0.00005) \times 10^{38} \text{ kg m}^2, \quad (29)$$

$$(a_0 = 6 \cdot 378 \text{ 137 m});$$

$$\begin{aligned} C - A &= (2.6398 \pm 0.0001) \times 10^{35} \text{ kg m}^2, \\ C - B &= (2.6221 \pm 0.0001) \times 10^{35} \text{ kg m}^2, \\ B - A &= (1.765 \pm 0.001) \times 10^{33} \text{ kg m}^2; \end{aligned} \quad (30)$$

$$\frac{C}{Ma_0^2} = \frac{J_2}{H} = (330 \text{ 701} \pm 2) \times 10^{-6}, \quad (31)$$

$$\frac{A}{Ma_0^2} = (329 \text{ 615} \pm 2) \times 10^{-6},$$

$$\frac{B}{Ma_0^2} = (329 \text{ 622} \pm 2) \times 10^{-6}; \quad (32)$$

$$\begin{aligned} A &= (8.0101 \pm 0.0002) \times 10^{37} \text{ kg m}^2, \\ B &= (8.0103 \pm 0.0002) \times 10^{37} \text{ kg m}^2, \\ C &= (8.0365 \pm 0.0002) \times 10^{37} \text{ kg m}^2, \end{aligned} \quad (33)$$

$$\alpha = \frac{C - B}{A} = (327 \text{ 353} \pm 6) \times 10^{-8},$$

$$\gamma = \frac{B - A}{C} = (2 \text{ 196} \pm 6) \times 10^8$$

$$\beta = \frac{C - A}{B} = (329 \text{ 549} \pm 6) \times 10^{-8}$$

II Primary geodetic Parameters, discussion

It should be noted that parameters a , f , J_2 , g_e , depend on the tidal system adopted. They have different values in tide-free, mean or zero-frequency tidal systems. However, W_0 and/or R_0 are independent of tidal system (BURSA 1995). The following relations can be used:

$$a(\text{mean}) = a(\text{tide-free}) + \frac{1}{2}(1 + k_s)R_0 \frac{\delta J_2}{k_s}, \quad (34)$$

$$\alpha(\text{mean}) = \alpha(\text{tide-free}) + \frac{3}{2}(1 + k_s) \frac{\delta J_2}{k_s};$$

$$a(\text{zero-frequency}) = a(\text{tide-free}) + \frac{1}{2}R_0 \delta J_2; \quad (35)$$

$$\alpha(\text{zero-frequency}) = \alpha(\text{tide-free}) + \frac{3}{2}\delta J_2;$$

$k_s = 0.9383$ is the secular Love number, δJ_2 is the zero-frequency tidal distortion in J_2 . First, the *internal consistency* of parameters a , W_0 , (R_0) and g_e should be examined:

sistency of parameters a , W_0 , (R_0) and g_e should be examined:

(i) If

$$a = 6 \text{ 378 136.7 m}$$

is adopted as primary, the derived values are

$$W_0 = 62 \text{ 636 856.88 m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2}, \quad (36)$$

$$(R_0 = 6 \text{ 363 672.46 m}), \quad (37)$$

$$g_e = 978 \text{ 032.714} \times 10^{-5} \text{ m s}^{-2}. \quad (38)$$

(ii) If

$$W_0 = (62 \text{ 636 855.8} \pm 0.5) \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2},$$

$$R_0 = (6 \text{ 363 672.6} \pm 0.05) \text{ m},$$

is adopted as primary, the derived values are (mean system)

$$a = 6 \text{ 378 136.62 m}, \quad (39)$$

$$g_e = 978 \text{ 032.705} \times 10^{-5} \text{ m s}^{-2}. \quad (40)$$

(iii) If (18)

$$g_e = (978 \text{ 032.78} \pm 0.2) \times 10^{-5} \text{ m s}^{-2},$$

is adopted as primary, the derived values are

$$a = 6 \text{ 378136.38 m}, \quad (41)$$

$$W_0 = 62 \text{ 636 858.8 m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2} \quad (42)$$

$$(R_0 = 6 \text{ 363 672.26 m}). \quad (43)$$

There are no significant discrepancies, the differences are about the standard errors.

However, the inaccuracy in (iii) is much higher than in (i) and/or (ii). That is why solution (iii) is irrelevant at present.

If the rounded value

$$W_0 = (62 \text{ 636 856.0} \pm 0.5) \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2} \quad (44)$$

$$R_0 = (6 \text{ 363 672.6} \pm 0.1) \text{ [m]} \quad (45)$$

is adopted as primary, then the derived length of the semimajor axis in the mean tide system comes out as

$$a = (6 \text{ 378 136.7} \pm 0.1) \text{ m}, \text{ (for zero-tide : } 6 \text{ 378 136.6)} \quad (46)$$

which is just the rounded value (20), and (in the zero frequency tide system)

$$g_e = (978 \text{ 032.7} \pm 0.1) \times 10^{-5} \text{ m s}^{-2}. \quad (47)$$

However, SC 3 recommends that, at present, GRS 1980 should be retained as the standard.

III Consistent set of fundamental constants (1997)

- Geocentric gravitational constant (including the mass of the Earth's atmosphere)
 $GM = (398\,600\,441.8 \pm 0.8) \times 10^6 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-2}$, [value (3)]
- Mean angular velocity of the Earth's rotation
 $\omega = 7\,292\,115 \times 10^{-11} \text{ rad s}^{-1}$ [value (5)]
- Second-degree zonal geopotential (Stokes) parameter (in the zero-frequency tide system, Epoch 1994)
 $J_2 = (1\,082\,635.9 \pm 0.1) \times 10^{-9}$ [value (11)]
- Geoidal potential
 $W_0 = (62\,636\,856.0 \pm 0.5) \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2}$, [value (44)]
- Geopotential scale factor
 $R_0 = GM/W_0 = (6\,363\,672.6 \pm 0.05) \text{ m}$ [value (45)]
- Mean equatorial radius (mean tide system)
 $a = (6\,378\,136.7 \pm 0.1) \text{ m}$ [value (46)]
- Mean polar flattening (mean tide system)
 $1/f = 298.25231 \pm 0.00001$ [value (23)]
- Mean equatorial gravity
 $g_e = (978\,032.78 \pm 0.1) \times 10^{-5} \text{ m s}^{-2}$, [value (18)].

GRAFAREND and ARDALAN (1999) have evaluated a (consistent) normal field based on a unique set of current best values of four parameters (W^o , ω , J_2 and GM) as a preliminary “follow-up” to the Geodetic Reference System GRS 80. It can lead to a level-ellipsoidal normal gravity field with a spheroidal external field in the Somigliana-Pizetti sense. By comparing the consequent values for the semimajor and semi-minor axes of the related equipotential ellipsoid with the corresponding GRS-80 axes (based on the same theory) the authors end up with axes which deviate by -40 and -45 cm, respectively from GRS 80 axes and within standard deviations from the current values such as in (21); but no g -values are given until now.

IV Appendix

A1. Zero-frequency tidal distortion in J_2

$$(J_2 = -C_{20})$$

$$\delta J_2 = k_s \frac{GM_L}{GM} \left(\frac{\bar{R}}{\Delta_{\oplus L}} \right)^3 \left(\frac{\bar{R}}{a_0} \right)^2 (E_2 + \delta_{2L})$$

$$+ k_s \frac{GM_S}{GM} \left(\frac{\bar{R}}{\Delta_{\oplus S}} \right)^3 \left(\frac{\bar{R}}{a_0} \right)^2 (E_2 + \delta_{2S}),$$

$$E_2 = -\frac{1}{2} + \frac{3}{4} \sin^2 \varepsilon_0,$$

$$\delta_{2L} = \frac{3}{4} (\sin^2 i_L - e_L^2) + \frac{9}{8} e_L^2 (\sin^2 \varepsilon_0 - \sin^2 i_L),$$

$$\delta_{2S} = -\frac{3}{4} e_S^2 \left(1 - \frac{3}{2} \sin^2 \varepsilon_0 \right),$$

$$\bar{R} = R_0 \left(1 + \frac{25}{21} v^3 q - \frac{10}{7} v^2 J_2 \right)^{1/5}$$

$$GM_L = 4\,902.799 \times 10^9 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-2}$$

(selenocentric grav. Const.),

$$GM_S = 13\,271\,244.0 \times 10^{13} \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-2},$$

$$\Delta_{\oplus L} = 384\,400 \text{ km}$$

(mean geocentric distance to the Moon),

$$\Delta_{\oplus S} = 1 \text{ AU} = 1.4959787 \times 10^{11} \text{ m},$$

$$a_0 = 6\,378\,137 \text{ m}$$

(scaling parameter associated with J_2),

$$\varepsilon_0 = 23^\circ 26' 21.4''$$

(obliquity of the ecliptic),

$$e_L = 0.05490$$

(eccentricity of the orbit of the Moon),

$$i_L = 5^\circ 0.9'$$

(inclination of Moon's orbit to the ecliptic),

$$e_S = 0.01671$$

(eccentricity of the heliocentric orbit of the Earth-Moon barycenter),

$$v = a_0/R_0 = 1.0022729;$$

$$k_s = 0.9383$$

(secular-fluid Love number associated with the zero-frequency second zonal tidal term);

$$\delta J_2 = -\delta C_{20} = (3.07531 \times 10^{-8}) k_s \text{ (conventional);}$$

$$\delta \bar{J}_2 = -\delta \bar{C}_{20} (1.37532 \times 10^{-8}) k_s \text{ (fully normalized).}$$

L = Lunar
S = Solar

A2. Definition

Because of tidal effects on various quantities, the tide-free, zero-frequency and mean values should be distinguished as follows:

- A tide-free value is the quantity from which all tidal effects have been removed.
- A zero-frequency value includes the indirect tidal distortion, but not the direct distortion.
- A mean tide value included both direct and indirect permanent tidal distortions.

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This report is basically an updated version of M. Bursa's SC 3 report presented in 1995 with some new material added.

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Com. VIII c/o G. Beutler, Director
Astronomical Institute of Bern, Sidlerstrasse 5
CH-3012 Bern, Switzerland
Phone: (41) 31 631 8591
Fax: (41) 31 631 3869
beutler@aiub.unibe.ch

Committee on Space Research (COSPAR)

51, boulevard de Montmorency
75016 Paris, France
Phone: (33) 1 45 25 06 79

Department of Geomatic Engineering

University College London, Gower St.
London WC1E 6BT, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-171-380-7028
Fax: (44)-171-380-0453

Federation of Astronomical and Geophysical Services (FAGS)

c/o D. Pugh, Institute of Oceanographic Science
Bidston Observatory, Brook Rd. Wormley
Godalming, Surrey GU8 5UB, United Kingdom
Phone: (44) 428 68 4141
Fax: (44) 428 68 5637
d.pugh@gateway.omnet.com.

ICSU Panel on World Data Centers

NOAA/EDIS, 325 Broadway
Boulder CO 80303, USA
Phone: (1) 303 497 37 98

International Association of Geodesy

c/o C.C. Tscherning, Department of Geophysics
Juliane Maries Vej 30, 2100 Copenhagen O. Denmark
Phone: (45) 3532 0601
Fax: (45) 3536 5357
iag@gfy.ku.dk
www.gfy.ku.dk/~iag

International Center on Recent Crustal Movements

250 66 Zdiby 98, Praha-Vychod, Czechoslovakia

International Geoid Service

Dipart. di Ingegneria Idraulica
Ambientale e del Rilevamento, Politecnico di Milano
Piazza Leonardo da Vinci 32, I-20133 Milano, Italy
Phone: (39) 2 2399 6504
Fax: (39) 2 2399 6530

Inter-Union Commission on the Lithosphere (ICL)

State University Utrecht, Institute of Earth Science
P.O. Box 80021, 3508 TA Utrecht, Netherlands

NASA Geodynamics Program

Geodynamics Branch Code FRG-2,
Greenbelt, Maryland, USA NASA Headquarters
Washington DC 20546, USA

North American Datum, National Geodetic Survey

NOAA/NOS, 6001 Executive Bld.
Rockville, Maryland 20852, USA
Phone: (1) 301 443 82 04

Permanent Service for Mean Sea Level

Inst. of Oceanographic Sciences
Bidston Observatory Birkenhead,
L43 7RA Merseyside, United Kingdom
Phone: (44) 51 653 86 33

NATIONAL DATA CENTERS

Sub-Commission for the Europe and Reference Frame (EUREF)

c/o Deutsches Geodätisches Forschungsinstitut
Marshallplatz 8, Munich 22, Germany

WDC-B for Solid Earth Physics

Maintained by Geophysical center, RAS,
Molodezhnaya, 3 Moscow 117296, Russia
www.wdcb.rssi.ru/WDCB/Wdc-sep.shtml

World Data Center A

Rotation of the Earth, U.S. Naval Observatory
Time Service Division, Washington D.C. 20390
USA

World Data Center for Solid Earth Geophysics

325 Broadway, Boulder
Colorado 80803, USA

Algeria

Service de traitement des Données Géodésiques

Institut National de Cartographie et Télédétection,
123, Rue de Tripoli, Hussein-Dey, Alger, Algeria
Phone: (213) 02 23 43 76 Fax: (213) 02 23 43 81
E-mail: inct99@ist.cerist.dz

Australia

Australia Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO)

GPO Box 378, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory
2601, Australia Phone: (61) 2 6249 9111
Fax: (61) 2 6249 9999 Internet: www.agso.gov.au

Australian Surveying and Land Information Group

(AUSLIG), P.O. Box 2, Belconnen, Australian Capital
Territory 2616, Australia
Phone: (61) 2 6201 4201 Fax: (61) 2 6201 4366
Internet: www.auslig.gov.au/geodesy

National Tidal Facility

The Flinders University of South Australia,
GPO Box 2100, Adelaide,
South Australia 5001, Australia
Phone: (61)-8-8201-7532 Fax: (61)-8-8201-7523
Internet: www.ntf.flinders.edu.au

Austria

Bundesamt für Eich und Vermessungswesen

Schiffamtsgasse 1-3, Postfach 50, A-1025 Wien,
Austria Phone: (43) 1 21176 3201 Fax: (43) 1 2161062

Institute of Theoretical Geodesy

Technical University Graz, Steyrergasse 30,
A-8010 Graz, Austria Phone: (43) 316 873 6346
Fax: (43) 316 813247 E-mail: suenkel@mgi.tu-graz.ac.at

Space Geodesy Division

Institute of Space Research of the Austrian Academy
of Sciences, Lustbühelstrasse 46, A-8010 Graz, Austria
Phone: (43) 316 472231 Fax: (43) 316 462678
E-mail: suenkel@mgi.tu-graz.ac.at

Belgium

Département d'Astronomie Fondamentale et de Geodynamique

Observatoire Royal de Belgique, Avenue Circulaire 3,
B-1180 Brussels, Belgium

Département de Géodésie

Institut Géographique National, 13, Abbaye de la
Cambre, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium

Brazil

Departamento de Geodesia

IBGE, Ave Brasil, 15671, Parada de Lucas,
21241-051 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: (55) 21 391 3674, 482-8217
 Fax: (55) 21 481 2747
 E-mail: geodesia@ibge.gov.br
 Internet: www.ibge.gov.br

Burundi

Institut Geographique de Burundi
 Département de Topographie et Cartographie,
 B.P. 34, Gitega, Burundi

Canada

Canadian Geodetic Information System
 Natural Resources Canada, Geodetic Survey division,
 615 Booth Street, Ottawa KIA 0E9, Ontario, Canada
 Phone: (1) 613 995 4410 Fax: (1) 613 995 3215
 E-mail: information@geod.nrcan.gc.ca Internet:
 www.emr.ca/~jtod/geophys

China

China Cartographic Publishing House
 Beijing, China

Chinese Academy of Surveying and Mapping
 16 Beitaping Road, Beijing 100039, China
 Institute of Geodesy and Geophysics, CAS 54,
 Xu Dong Road, 430077 Wuhan, China

National Bureau of Surveying and Mapping
 Baiwanzhuang, Beijing, 100830, China

National Geomatics Center of China
 Beijing China

Denmark

National Survey and Cadastre, Geodetic Division
 Rentemestervej 8, DK-2400 Copenhagen NV.,
 Denmark

Finland

Finnish Geodetic Institute
 P.O. Box 15 (Geodeetinrinne 2), FIN-02431,
 Finland Phone: (358)-9-295 550
 Fax: (358)-9-295 552 00 E-mail: fgi@fgi.fi

France

Département Banque de Données du Sous-Sol
 Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières, Dept.
 BSS, B.P. 6009, 45060 Orleans Cedex, France

Groupe de Recherche de Géodésie Spatiale (GRGS)
 GRGS/Institut Geographique National, 2, Avenue
 Pasteur, B.P. 68, F-94160 Saint-Mande, France

Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique
 Outre-Mer (ORSTOM), 70-74 route d'Aulney, F-93140
 Bondy, France

Section Géodésie-Géophysique

Etablissement Principal du Service Hydrographique et
 Océanographique de la Marine, 13, Rue du Chantellier,
 B.P. 426, F-29275 Brest Cedex, France

Service de la Géodésie et du Nivellement

Institut Geographique National, 2, Avenue Pasteur,
 B.P. 68, F-29275 Saint-Mande, France

Germany

**Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Vermessungsverwaltungen der
 Länder der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (AdV)**
 Geschäftsstelle: Landesbetrieb, Landesvermessung und
 Geobasisinformation, Neudersachsen, Postfach 510450,
 Warmbüchekamp 2, D-30634 Hannover, Germany
 Phone: (49)-511-64609-151 Fax: (49)-511-64609-162

Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie
 Richard-Strauss-Allee 11, D-60598 Frankfurt/Main,
 Germany Phone: (49)-0-6963331 Fax: (49)-0-696333235

Bundesamt für Seeschifffahrt und Hydrographie (BSH)
 Dierkower Damm 45, D-18146 Rostock, Germany
 Phone: (49)-381-4563602 Fax: (49)-381-4563948

EUROLAS Data Center (EDC)
 Deutsches Geodätisches Forschungsinstitut, Abt. I,
 Marstallplatz 8, D-8000 München 22, Germany

National Gravity Data Base
 Deutsches Geodätisches Forschungsinstitut (DGFI),
 Abt. I, Marstallplatz 8, D-8000 München 22, Germany

Point of Contact for Geodetic Data
 Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Vermessungsverwaltungen
 deutscher Länder (AdV), Niedersächsischer Minister
 des Inneren, D-3000 Hannover, Germany

Topography Data Base
 Institut für Angewandte Geodäsie (IFAG), Richard
 Strauss Allee 11, D-6000 Frankfurt a.M., 70, Germany

Greece

Department of Geodesy and Surveying
 University of Thessaloniki, POB 492, Thessaloniki,
 Greece

Dionysos Satellite Observatory
 Geodesy Department, National Technical University,
 Zographou 15773, Athens, Greece

Hellenic Army Geographic Service
 Pedion Areas, Greece

Hungary

Eötvös Loránd Geophysical Institute of Hungary
 P.O. Box 35, H-1440 Budapest, Hungary
 Phone: (36) 1 252 4999 Fax: (36) 1 163 7256

Tòth Agoston Mapping and Military Geographic Institute of the Hungarian Army

P.O. Box 37, H-1525 Budapest 114, Hungary
Phone: (36) 1 332 0161
Fax: (36) 1 332 0161

Iceland

Iceland Geodetic Survey

P.O. Box 5536, 05 Reykjavik, Iceland

Icelandic National Energy Authority

Grensasvegur 9, 108 Reykjavik, Iceland

Indonesia

National Coordination Agency for Surveys and Mapping

Jalan Raya Bogor, Km. 46, Cibinong,
Bogor, Indonesia

Ireland

Michael Cory

Controller of Mapping, Ordnance Survey Office,
Phoenix Park, Dublin 8, Ireland
Phone: (353) (0) 1 802 5300 Fax: (353) (0) 1 820 4156

Japan

Earthquake Research Institute

University of Tokyo, Earthquake Prediction
Research Center, 1-1, Yayoi 1, Bunkyo-ku,
Tokyo 113-0032,
Japan Phone: (81) 3 5689 7264 Fax: (81) 3 5689 7234

Earthquake Research Institute

University of Tokyo, Earthquake Observation Center,
1-1, Yayoi 1, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0032, Japan
Phone: (81) 3 3813 7627 Fax: (81) 3 3813 8026

Geographical Survey Institute

Kitasato-1, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-0811, Japan
Phone: (81)-298-64-1111 Fax: (81)-298-64-1802

Hydrographic Department

Maritime Safety Agency, 3-1 Tsukiji 5, Chuo-ku,
Tokyo 104-0045, Japan Phone: (81) 3 3541 3685
Fax: (81) 3 3248 1250

Mizusawa Astro Geodynamics Observatory

National Astronomical Observatory, 12,
Hoshigaoka-cho 2, Mizusawan, Iwate 023-0861, Japan
Phone: (81)-197-22-7111 Fax: (81)-197-22-7120

National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention

Tenodai 3-1, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-0006, Japan
Phone: (81) 298 51 1611 Fax: (81) 298 51 5658

Observation Center for Prediction of Earthquakes and Volcanic Eruptions

Graduate School of Science, Tohoku University,
Aobayama, Aoba-ku, Sendai, Miyagi 980, Japan
Phone: (81)-22-225-1950 Fax: (81)22-264-3292

Ocean Research Institute, University of Tokyo

15-1, Minamidai 1, Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164, Japan
Phone: (81) 3 5351 6430 Fax: 3 3377 3292

Research Center for Earthquake Prediction

Hokkaido University, Kita-10, Nishi-8, Kita-ku,
Sapporo, Hokkaido, 060, Japan
Phone: (81) 11 716 8377 Fax: (81) 11 746 7404

Kenya

Research Center for Earthquake Prediction

Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto
University, Gokasho, Uji, Kyoto 611, Japan
Phone: (81)-774-38-4193

Fax: (81)-774-38-4190 Survey of Kenya,
P.O. Box 30046, Nairobi, Kenya

Madagascar

National Institute of Geodesy and Cartography

Lalana Dama-tsoha Razafintsalama
J.B., B.P. 323, 101 Antananarivo, Madagascar

Mexico

Departamento de Geodesia

Direccion General de Geografia, San Antonio Abad
124-PB, Col. Transito, Del. Cuavi, 06820, Mexico

Netherlands

Amsterdam Ordnance Datum

RWS/Survey Department, Kanaalweg 3b, Delft,
P.O. Box 5023, 2600 GA, Delft, Netherlands

Department of Triangulation

hoofdirectie Kadaster, Waltersingel 1, 7314
NK Apeldoorn, Netherlands

New Zealand

Hydrographic Office

P.O. Box 33-341, Takapuna 9, Auckland, New Zealand

Institute of Geological & Nuclear Sciences

P.O. Box 30-368, Lower Hutt, New Zealand
Phone: (64) 4 570 1444
Fax: (64) 4 570 1440

E-mail: d.dasby@gns.cri.nz Internet: www.gns.cri.nz

Land Information New Zealand

Head Office, P.O. Box 5501, Wellington, New Zealand
Phone: (64) 4 460 0110 Fax: (64) 4 460 0575
E-mail: sg@linz.govt.nz Internet: www.linz.govt.nz

Portugal

Norwegian Mapping Authority

Kartverksveien 21, N-3500 HEnefoss, Norway

Instituto de Investigacao Cientifica Tropical

Centro de Geodesia, R. da Jungqueira, 534, 1300-341
Lisboa, Portugal

Instituto Portugues de Cartografia e Cadastro
R. Artilharia Um, 107, 1099-052 Lisboa, Portugal

Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil
Núcleo de Medidas Geodésicas, Av. do Brasil,
101, 1700-066 Lisboa, Portugal

South Africa

Surveys and Mapping
Private Bag, 7705 Mowbray, Republic of South Africa

Centro Nacional de Informacion Geografica
Ibanez de Ibero 3, 28003 Madrid, Spain
Phone: (34) 91 597 97 39 Fax: (34) 91 597 94 18

Spain

Instituto de Astronomia y Geodesia
UCM-CSIC, Facultad de Matematicas, Universidade
Complense, Ciudad Universitaria, 28040 Madrid, Spain
Phone: (34) 91 39 445 82 Fax: (34) 91 39 446 15

Instituto Geografico Nacional
Ibanez de Ibero 3, 28003 Madrid, Spain
Phone: (34) 91 597 9000 Fax: (34) 91 597 97 58

Servei de Geodesia
Institut Cartograifc de Catalunya, Parc de Montjuic,
08006 Barcelona, Spain Phone: (34) 93 42 529 00
Fax: (34) 93 42 674 42

Sweden

National Land Survey
Division of Geodetic Research, S-801 82 Gavle, Sweden

Switzerland

Astronomical Institute University of Berne
Sidlerstrasse 5, CH-3012 Berne, Switzerland

Bundesamt für Landestopographie
Seftigenstrasse 264, CH-3084 Wabern, Switzerland

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology
Zurich (ETH Zurich), ETH-Honggerberg,
CH-8093 Zurich Switzerland

Syria

General Establishment of Surveying
Department of Geodesy, P.O. Box 3094,
Damascus, Syria

Thailand

Royal Thai Survey Department
Supreme Command Headquarters, Kanlayanamaitri
St., Bangkok 10200, Thailand

Tunisia

Direction de la Géodésie et du Nivellement
Office de la Topographie et de la Cartographie, Cite
Olympique, Tunis, Tunisia

Turkey

General command of Mapping
Harita Genel Komutanligi, 06100, Cebece, Ankara,
Turkey

United Kingdom

British Geological Survey
Regional Geophysics Group, Nicker Hill, Keyworth,
Nottingham NG 12 5GG, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-0115 9363100 Fax: (44)-0115 9363145

British Geological Survey, Marine Geophysics Unit
Murchison House, West Mains House, Edinburgh
EH9 3LA, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-0131 667 1000

Deacon Oceanographic Laboratory
Brook Road, Wormley, Godalming, Surrey GU8 5UB,
United Kingdom

Earth Observation Data Centre, Space Department
Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, Hants
GU14 6TD, United Kingdom

Hydrographic Office
Physical Oceanography, Taunton, Somerset TA1 2DN,
United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-01823337900 Fax: (44)-01823284077

Institute of Geological Sciences
Marine Geophysics Unit, Murchison House,
West Mains Roads, Edingburgh EH9 3LA,
United Kingdom

Military Survey, Clarke Building
Elmwood Avenue, Feltham, Middlesex TW 13 7AE,
United Kingdom Phone: (44)-0181 818 2225

Ordnance Survey of Great Britain
Geodetic Services Branch, Romsey Road, Maybush,
Southampton SO9 4DH, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-01703 792731 Fax: (44)-01703-792687

Ordnance Survey of Great Britain
Ordnance Survey International, Romsey Road,
Maybush, Southampton SO9 4DH, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-01703 792659

Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory
Bidston Observatory, Birkenhead, Merseyside L43 7RA,
United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-0151 653 8633 Fax: (44)-0151 653 6269

Royal Greenwich Observatory
Space Geodesy Group and Nautical, Almanac Office,
Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0EZ
United Kingdom

The EPSRC Geophysical Data Facility
Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Chilton, Didcot,
Oxon OX1 1 OQX, United Kingdom

World Data Centre CI for Solar Terrestrial Physics
Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Chilton, Didcot,
Oxon OX1 1 OQX, United Kingdom

Uruguay

Servicio Geografico Militar
Ira. Division (Geodesia), 8 de Octubre 3255,
Montevideo, Uruguay

USA

CORS GPS Network Data Archive
National Geodetic Survey, NOAA, Code N/NGS
SSMC-3, 1315 East-West Highway, MD 20910-3282,
USA

Crustal Dynamics Data Information System
NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt,
MD 20771, USA

Eastern-National Cartographic Information Center
(E-NCIC), 536 National Center, Reston, VA 22092,
USA

National Cartographic Information Center
U.S. Geological Survey, 507 National Center, Reston,
VA 22092, USA

National Geodetic Information Center
National Geodetic Survey, NOAA, Code N/NGS
SSMC-3, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring,
MD 20910-3282, USA

National Geophysical Data Center
NOAA, Code E/GC4, 325 Broadway, Boulder,
CO 80303-3328, USA

EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Australia

Centre for Spatial Information Science

School of Geography & Environmental Science,
University of Tasmania, GPO Box 252-76, Hobart,
Tasmania 7001, Australia
Phone: (61)-3-6226-2134, Fax: (61)-3-6224-0282
E-mail: CENSIS.Enquiries@utas.edu.au
Internet: www.utas.edu.au/docs/geomatics/

Department of Civil

Surveying and Environmental Engineering,
University of Newcastle, Newcastle, New South Wales
2308, Australia
Phone: (61) 2 4921 6058 Fax: (61) 2 4921 6991
E-mail: cejgf@cc.newcastle.edu.au Internet:
www.eng.newcastle.edu.au/ce/

Department of Geomatics

University of Melbourne, Parkville,
Victoria 3052, Australia
Phone: (61)-3-344-6806 Fax: (61)-3-347-2916
E-mail: geomatics@eng.unimelb.edu.au
Internet: www.geom.unimelb.edu.au

Department of Land Information

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology,
PO Box 2476V, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia
Phone: (61)-3-9925-2213 Fax: (61)-3-9663-2517
E-mail: landinfo@rmit.edu.au
Internet: www.ls.rmit.edu.au

School of Geoinformatics

Planning and Building, University of South Australia,
GPO Box 2471, South Australia 5001, Australia
Phone: (61) 8 8302 2227 Fax: (61) 8 8302 2252
E-mail: john.gilliland@unisa.edu.au
Internet: www.unisa.edu.au/gbp/index.htm

School of Geomatic Engineering

University of New South Wales, Sydney,
New South Wales 2052, Australia
Phone: (61)-2-9385-4182 Fax: (61)-2-9313-7493

E-mail: geomatic.eng@unsw.edu.au
Internet: www.gmat.edu.au

School of Planning, Landscape, Architecture and Surveying

Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering,
Queensland University of Technology, GPO Box 2434,
Brisbane, Queensland 4001,
Phone: (61)-7-3864-2671 Fax: (61)-7-3864-1809
E-mail: b.hannigan@qut.edu.au Internet: www.bee.
qut.edu.au/plas/fplasweb/SURVEYING.htm

School of Spatial Sciences

Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U1987,
Perth, Western Australia 6845, Australia
Phone: (61) 8 9266 7565 Fax: (61) 8 9266 2703
E-mail: sali@vesta.curtin.edu.au
Internet: www.cage.curtin.edu.au/surveying

Austria

Technical University Graz

Geodetic Institutes, Steyrergasse 30,
A-8010 Graz, Austria
Phone: (43)-316-873-6331 Fax: (43)-316-827685
E-mail: bt@fphotosg01.tu-graz.ac.at

Vienna University of Technology

Geodetic Institutes, Gusshausstrasse 27-29, A-1040
Vienna, Austria
Phone: (43) 222 58801 3814 Fax: (43) 222 5056268
E-mail: pwald@fbgeo1.tuwien.ac.at

Belgium

Ecole Royale Militaire

Chaire d'Astronomie-Géodésie, 30,
Avenue de la Renaissance, B-1040 Bruxelles, Belgium
Phone: 2 735 51 52 Fax: 2 735 24 21

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

Astronomisch Instituut, Celestijnenlaan, 200 B,
B-3001 Leuven, Belgium
Phone: 16 20 06 56 Fax: 16 20 53 08

Université Catholique de Louvain

Unité d'Astronomie et de Géophysique, 2, Chemin du Cyclotron, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium
Phone: 10 47 32 97 Fax: 10 47 47 22

Université de Liege

Institut d'Astrophysique, 5, Avenue de Cointe, B-4200 Liege, Belgium
Phone: 41 52 99 80 Fax: 41 52 74 74

Brazil**Escola Politecnica da USP**

Departamento de Engenharia de Transportes, Caixa Postal 61548, 0524-970, Sao Paulo, Brazil
Phone: (55)-11-818-5208 Fax: (55)-11-818-5716

Instituto Militar de Engenharia

Departamento de Cartografia, DE6 Praca Gen. Tiburcio 80, 22290-270 Rio de Janeiro-RJ, Brazil

Universidade Federal de Pernambuco

Departamento de Engenharia Cartografica, Rua Academico helio Ramos S/N, Cidade Universitaria, 50741, Recife – Pe, Brazil

Universidade Federal do Parana

Curso de Pos-Graduacao em Ciencias Geodesicas, Departamento de Geomatica, P.O. Box 019001, 81531-990 Curitiba-PR, Brazil
Phone: (55) 41 361 3153 Fax: (55) 41 266 2393
E-mail: cpgcg@geoc.ufpr.br

Canada**Université Laval**

Departement des sciences géodésiques et de télédétection, Pavillon Louis-Jacques Casault, Sainte-Foy, Quebec, G1K 7P4, Canada
Phone: (1) 418 656 2530 Fax: (1) 418 656 7411
E-mail: ffg@ffg.ulaval.ca
Internet: www:http://forestgeomat.for.ulaval.ca

University of Calgary

Department of Geomatics Engineering, 2500 University Drive, N.W., Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4, Canada
Phone: (1) 403 220 5834 Fax: (1) 403 284 1980
E-mail: geomatics@ensu.ucalgary.ca
Internet: www:http://www.ensu.ucalgary.ca/

University of New Brunswick

Département des Sciences Géomatiques, P.O. Box 4400, Fredicton, New Brunswick, E3B 5A#, Canada
Phone: (1) 506 453 4698 Fax: (1) 506 453 4943
E-mail: se@unb.ca, Internet: www:http://degaulle.hil.unb.ca/Geodesy/index.html

University of Toronto

Program in Geomatics, Department of Geography, Erindale Campus, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L5L 1C6
Phone: (1) 905 828 3861 Fax: (1) 905 828 5273
E-mail: amrhein@geog.utoronto.ca
Internet: www:http://www.geog.utoronto.ca

China

Wuhan Technical University of Surveying and Mapping
Wuhan, 430079, China

Zheng Zou Technical School of Surveying and Mapping
Zheng Zhou, China

Denmark**Institut for Samfundsudvikling og Planlaegning**

Aalborg Universitetscenter, Fibigerstrade 11, DK- 9220 Aalborg Oest, Denmark

Niels Bohr Institute for Astronomy

Physics and Geophysics, Department of Geophysics, University of Copenhagen, Juliane Maries Vej 30, DK-2100 Copenhagen, Denmark
Phone: (45) 3532 0601 Fax: (45) 3536 5357

Finland**Department of Geophysics**

University of Helsinki, Fabianinkatu 24 A, SF-00100 Helsinki, Finland
Phone: (358) 1911 Fax: (358) 1913385

France**Centre d'Etude Spatiale des Rayonnements**

Université Paul Sabatier, 9, Avenue du Colonel Roche, B.P. 4346, F-31029 Toulouse Cedex,
Phone: (33) 61 55 66 66 Fax: (33) 61 55 67 01

Ecole Nationale des Sciences Géographiques

2, Avenue Pasteur, B.P. 68, F-94160 Saint-Mandé, France, Phone: (33) 1 43 98 80 52
Fax: (33) 1 43 98 84 65

Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Industries de Strasbourg

24, Rue de la Victoire, F-67084 Strasbourg Cedex, France, Phone: (33) 88 35 55 05
Fax: (33) 88 24 14 90

Ecole Supérieure des Géomètres et Topographes

Conservatoire National des Arts et métiers, 18, Allée Jean Rostand, B.P. 77, F-91002 Evry Cedex, France
Phone: (33) 60779740 Fax: (33)60779690

Observatoire de Paris

Service Scolaire, 61, Avenue de l'Observatoire, F-75014 Paris, France
Phone: (33) 40 51 21 70

Germany**Institut für Stadtebau, Bodenordnung und Kulturtechnik**

Meckenheimer Allee 172, 5300 Bonn 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0228-737 499 Fax: (49) 0228-733 281

Technische Hochschule Aachen

Lehrstuhl für Geodäsie II, Templergraben 55, 5100

Aachen, Germany
Phone: (49) 0241-80 53 00 Fax: (49) 0241-80 44 13

Technische Hochschule Darmstadt
Institut für Physikalische Geodäsie, Petersenstrasse 13,
6100 Darmstadt, Germany
Phone: (49) 06151-163 109 Fax: (49) 06151-165 489

Technische Hochschule Darmstadt
Geodätisches Institut, Petersenstrasse 13, 6100
Darmstadt, Germany
Phone: (49) 06151-162 147 Fax: (49) 06151-164 047

Technische Hochschule Darmstadt
FB Photogrammetrie im FB 12, Vermessungswesen,
Petersenstrasse 13, 6100 Darmstadt, Germany
Phone: (49) 06151-162 035 Fax: (49) 06151-165 489

Technische Universität Berlin
Fachgebiet Geodäsie und Ausgleichsrechnung, Strasse
des 17. Juni 135, 1000 Berlin 12, Germany
Phone: (49) 030-314 22 41/32 08
Fax: (49) 030-31 42 32 22

Technische Universität Berlin
Institut für Astronomische und Physikalische Geodäsie,
Sekt. H 2, Strasse des 17. Juni 135, 1000 Berlin 12,
Germany
Phone: (49) 030-314 32 05
Fax: (49) 030-31 42 32 22

Technische Universität Berlin
Institut für Photogrammetrie und Kartographie,
Sekt. EB 9, Strasse des 17. Juni 135,
1000 Berlin 12, Germany Phone: (49) 030 314 23 331
Fax: (49) 030-314 21 104

Technische Universität Braunschweig
Institut für Photogrammetrie und Bildverarbeitung,
Gauss-Strasse 22, 3300 Braunschweig, Germany
Phone: (49) 0531-391 28 70 Fax: (49) 0531-391 58 39

Technische Universität Braunschweig
Institut für Vermessungskunde, Pockelstrasse 4,
Hochhaus, 3300 Braunschweig, Germany
Phone: (49) 0531-391 74 70 Fax: (49) 0531-391 55 99

Technische Universität Dresden
Lehrstuhl für Theoretische u. Physikalische Geodäsie,
Mommsenstrasse 13, O-8027 Dresden, Germany
Phone: (49) 375 1 463 0 (zentrale)
Fax: (49) 375 1 463 7106

Technische Universität Dresden
Lehrstuhl für Astronomie, Mommsenstrasse 13,
O-8027 Dresden, Germany
Phone: (49) 375 1 463 4097, Fax: (49) 375 1 463 7106

Technische Universität Dresden
Lehrstuhl für Ing. Geodäsie, Mommsenstrasse 13,
O-8027 Dresden, Germany
Phone: (49) 375 1 463 2869/4249
Fax: (49) 375 1 463 7106

Technische Universität Dresden
Institut für Photogrammetrie und Fernerkundung,
Mommsenstrasse 13, O-8027 Dresden, Germany
Phone: (49) 375 1 463 3372 Fax: (49) 375 1 463 7106

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Institut für Kartographie und Geographie,
Mommsenstrasse 13, O-8027 Dresden, Germany
Phone: (49) 375 1 463 3779 Fax: (49) 375 1 463 7106

Technische Universität München
Institut für Astronomische und Physikalische Geodäsie,
Arcistrasse 21, 8000 München 2, Germany
Phone: (49) 089-2105 3195/3190 Fax: (49) 089-2105 2000

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8000 München 2, Germany
Phone: (49) 089-2105 2850, Fax: (49) 089-2105 281976

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Meckenheimer Allee 172, 5300 Bonn 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0228-733 526/27 Fax: (49) 0228-695 246

Universität Bonn
Institut für Photogrammetrie, Nussallee 15,
5300 Bonn 1, Germany Phone: (49) 0228-732 713
Fax: (49) 0228-733 281

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Institut für Theoretische Geodäsie, Nussallee 17,
5300 Bonn 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0228-732 628/628, Fax: (49) 0228-733 708

Universität Bonn
Geodätisches Institut, Nussallee 17,
5300 Bonn 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0228-732 620 Fax: (49) 0228-733 281

Universität der Bundeswehr München
Institut für Geodäsie, D-8577 Neubiberg, Germany
Phone: (49) 089-6004 3435 Fax: (49) 089-6004 4090

Universität Hannover
Institut für Kartographie, Appelstrasse 9 A,
3000 Hannover 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0511-762 35 88/89 Fax: (49) 0511-762 2472

Universität Hannover
Geodätisches Institut, Nienburger Strasse 1,
3000 Hannover 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0511 762 2461 Fax: (49) 0511 762 2468

Universität Hannover

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3000 Hannover 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0511-762 2481 Fax: (49) 0511-762 2482

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Hannover 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0511-762 2794 Fax: (49) 0511-762 4006

Universität Karlsruhe

Geodätisches Institut, Englerstrasse 7
7500 Karlsruhe 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0721-608 2305/2301/2300
Fax: (49) 0721-669 4552

Universität Karlsruhe

Institut für Photogrammetrie und Topographie
Englerstrasse 7, 7500 Karlsruhe 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0721-608 2315 Fax: (49) 0721-608 4290

Universität Karlsruhe

Professur für Geodynamik, Geodätisches Institut,
Englerstrasse 7, 7500 Karlsruhe 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0721-608 2307 Fax: (49) 0721-669 4552

Universität Stuttgart

Institut für Photogrammetrie, Keplerstrasse 11
D-70174 Stuttgart 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0711-121 3386 Fax: (49) 0711-121 3297

Universität Stuttgart

Geodätisches Institut, Keplerstrasse 11
70174 Stuttgart 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0711-121 3390 Fax: (49) 0711 121 3297

Universität Stuttgart

Institut für Navigation, Keplerstrasse 11
70174 Stuttgart 1, Germany
Phone: (49) 0711-121 3400 Fax: (49) 0711-121 2755

Universität Stuttgart

Institut für Anwendung der Geodäsie im Bauwesen,
Pfaffenweldring 7 A, 70569 Stuttgart 80, Germany
Phone: (49) 0711-685 6612 Fax: (49) 0711-685 6670

Hungary

**College for Surveying and County-planning
of the University of Forestry and Wood Sciences**
Pirosalma u. 1-3., PO Box 51, H-8002 Székesfehérvár,
Hungary, Phone: (36) 00 312 988
Fax: (36) 22 327 697 E-mail: gep@geo.cslm.hu

**Kossuth Lajos Military Academy of the Hungarian Home
Defense Forces**

H-2001 Szentendre, PO Box 160 Hungary
Phone: (36) 26 311 014 Fax: (36) 26 312 136

Loránd Eötvös University, Department of Geophysics

Ludovika tér 2, H-1083 Budapest, Hungary
Phone: (36) 1 210 1089
Fax: (36) 1 210 1089, E-mail: mesko@ludens.elte.hu

Loránd Eötvös University

Department of Cartography, Ludovika tér 2, H-1083
Budapest, Hungary
Phone: (36) 1 134 2785 Fax: (36) 1 134 2785
E-mail: klinghammer@ludens.elte.hu

Miskolc University

Department of Geophysics, Egyetemváros
H-3315 Miskolc, Hungary
Phone: (36) 46 365 936 Fax: (36) 46 362 936
E-mail: departm@gf02.uni-miskolc.hu

Miskolc University

Department of Geodesy and Mining Surveying
Egyetemváros, H-3515 Miskolc, Hungary
Phone: (36) 46 365 111 Fax: (36) 46 362 972
E-mail: gbmegg@gold.uni-miskolc.hu

Technical University of Budapest

Department of Geodesy, H-1521 Budapest
PO Box 91, Hungary
Phone: (36) 1 463 3222 Fax: (36) 1 463 31 91
E-mail: jadam@epito.bme.hu

Technical University of Budapest

Department of Photogrammetry, H-1521 Budapest,
PO Box 91, Hungary
Phone: (36) 1 463 1187 Fax: (36) 1 463 3084
E-mail: adetrekoi@epito.bme.hu

Technical University of Budapest

Department of Surveying, H-1521 Budapest
PO Box 91, Hungary
Phone: (36) 1 463 1146 Fax: (36) 1 463 3209
E-mail: akrauter@epito.bme.hu

University of Forestry and Wood Sciences

Department of Surveying and Geoinformatics,
Bajcsy-Zsilinsky út 4, H-9400 Sopron, Hungary
Phone: (36) 99 311 100 Fax: (36) 99 311 103
E-mail: bacsaty@classic.fe.hu

University of Forestry and Wood Sciences

Department of Earth Sciences, Csatkai u. 6-8, PO Box 5,
H-9400 Sopron, Hungary
Phone: (36) 99 314 390 Fax: (36) 99 313 267
E-mail: banyai@ggki.hu

Italy**Politecnico di Milano**

Piazza Leonardo de Vince 32, I-20133, Italy
Phone: (39)2 2399 6504/6506 Fax: (39) 2 2399 6530

Japan**Construction College**

2-1 Kihei-cho 2, Kodaira, Tokyo 187-8520, Japan
Phone: (81)-423-21-1541 Fax: (81)-423-21-8057

Hirosaki University

Faculty of Science & Technology, 3 Bunkyo-cho,

Hirosaki, Aomori 036-8561, Japan
Phone: (81) 172 36 2111 Fax: (81) 172 33 6000

Hokkaido University

Graduate School of Science, Kita-10 Nishi-8,
Kita-ku, Sapporo, Hokkaido 060-0810, Japan
Phone: (81) 11 716 8377 Fax: (81) 11 746 7404

Ibaraki University

Faculty of Science, 1-1 Bunkyo 2, Mito, Ibaraki
310-8512, Japan
Phone: (81) 29 226 1621, Fax: (81) 29 228 8405

Kagoshima University

Faculty of Science, 21-35 Gungen 1, Kagoshima,
Kagoshima 890-0065, Japan
Phone: (81) 992 54 7141 Fax: (81) 992 59 4720

Kanazawa University

Faculty of Science, Kakuma-cho, Kanazawa,
Ishikawa 920-1164, Japan
Phone: (81) 762 64 5731 Fax: (81) 762 64 6062

Kensetsu University

2-1 Kihei-cho 2, Kodaira,
Tokyo 187, Japan Phone: (81) 423 21 1541

Kochi University

Department of Natural Environmental Science, 5-1
Akabono 2, Kochi, Kochi 780, Japan
Phone: (81) 888 44 8288 Fax: (81) 888 44 8359

Kyoto University

Graduate School of Science,
Kita-Shirakawa-Oiwake-cho, Sakyo-ku Kyoto
Kyoto 606-8502, Japan
Phone: (81) 75 753 3910 Fax: (81) 75 753 3717

Kyoto University

Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Research Center
for Earthquake Prediction, Gokasho, Uji
Kyoto 611-0011, Japan
Phone: (81) 774 38 4193 Fax: (81) 774 38 4190

Kyushu University

Faculty of Science, 10-1 Hakozaki 6, Higashi-ku
Fukuoka, Fukuoka 812-8581, Japan
Phone: (81) 92 641 1101

Maritime Safety Academy

Maritime Safety Agency, 1, Wakaba-cho 5-1, Kure
Hiroshima 737-0832, Japan
Phone: (81) 823 21 4961 Fax: (81) 823 20 0087

Nagoya University

Faculty of Science, Furo-cho, Chikusa-ku, Nagoya,
Aichi 464-0814, Japan
Phone: (81) 52 781 5111 Fax: (81) 52 789 3047

Shinshu University

Faculty of Science, 1-1, Asahi 3, Matsumoto, Nagano
390-8621, Japan
Phone: (81) 263 35 4600 Fax: (81) 263 37 2506

Shizuoka University

Faculty of Science, 836 Otani, Shizuoka, Shizuoka
422-8529, Japan
Phone: (81) 54 237 1111 Fax: (81) 54 237 9184

Tohoku University

Observation Center for Prediction of Earthquakes
and Volcanic Eruptions, Aobayama, Aoba-ku
Sendai, Miyagi 980-8578, Japan
Phone: (81) 22 225 1950 Fax: (81) 22 264 3292

Tohoku University

Graduate School of Science, Aoba, Aramaki, Aoba-ku,
Sendai, Miyagi 980-8578, Japan
Phone: (81) 22 222 1800

Tokyo Institute of Technology

Faculty of Science, 12-1, O-okayama 2, Meguro-ku,
Tokyo 152-8551, Japan
Phone: (81) 3 3726 1111, Fax: (81) 3 5499 4093

University of Tokyo

Graduate School of Science, 3-1, Hongo 7
Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113, Japan
Phone: (81) 3 5841 2111 Fax: (81) 3 5802 4363

University of Tokyo

Ocean Research Institute, 15-1, Minamidai 1,
Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164-0014, Japan
Phone: (81) 3 5351 6430 Fax: (81) 3 3377 3292

University of Tokyo

Earthquake Research Institute, Earthquake Prediction
Research Center, 1-1, Yayoi 1, Bunkyo-ku
Tokyo 113-0032, Japan
Phone: (81) 3 5689 7264 Fax: (81) 3 5689 7234

Netherlands

Faculty of Geodesy

Delft University of Tech., Thijsseweg 11, 2629 JA
Delft, Netherlands

New Zealand

Department of Surveying

University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin,
New Zealand Phone: (64) 3 479 7585
Fax: (64) 3 479 7586
E-mail: surveying@otago.ac.nz
Internet: www.surveying.otago.ac.nz/

Portugal

Faculdade de Ciencias da Universidade de Lisboa

Nucleo de Eng Geográfica, R. da Escola Politécnica
58, 1250-102 Lisboa, Portugal

**Faculdade de Ciencias e Tecnologia da Universidade
de Coimbra, Seccao de Eng Geográfica**

Largo D. Dinis, Colégio S. Jerónimo, 3000-141
Coimbra, Portugal

Observatorio Astronomico

Prof. Manuel de Barros, Alameda do Monte da Virgem,
4430-146 Vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal

Departamento de Astronomia y Geodesia

Facultad de Matematicas, Universidad Complutense,
Ciudad Universitaria, 28040 Madrid, Spain
Phone: (34) 91 39 44 582 Fax: (34) 91 39 44 607

Spain**Escuela de Geodesia y Topograifa**

Servicio Geografico del Ejercito, Dario Gazabo 8,
28024 Madrid, Spain
Phone: (34) 91 711 5943

Universitat Politecnica de Valencia

De Ingenieria Cartografica, Geodesia y Fotogrametria,
Camino de Vera, s/u, 46022 Valencia, Spain
Phone: (34) 96 3877550 Fax: (34) 96 3877559
E-mail: iquinta@egf.upv.es
Internet: www.upv.es/info/DICGF/index.html

Sweden**Institute of Earth Sciences/Geophysics**

University of Uppsala, Villavägen 16, S-752 36, Sweden

Royal Institute of Technology

Department of Geodesy, S-100 44 Stockholm, Sweden
Phone: (46) 87 90 73 30

Switzerland**EPFL (Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne)**

Institut de Géodésie et Mensuration, 1015 Lausanne,
Phone: (41) 021 693 11 11

ETH-Zürich

Department of Geodetic Sciences, Institut für
kartographie, ETH-Honggerberg, 8093 Zürich,
Switzerland Phone: (41) 01 377 30 33

ETH-Zürich (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule)

Department of Geodetic Sciences, Institut für Geodäsie
und Photogrammetrie, ETH-Honggerberg,
8093 Zürich, Switzerland
Phone: (41) 01 377 26 61, Fax: (41) 01 371 25 93

Turkey**Bosphorous University**

Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research
Institute Geodesy Section, Cengelkoy, Istanbul, Turkey

Karadeniz Technical University

Geodesy and Photogrammetry Department, Trabzon,
Turkey

Selcuk University

Geodesy and Photogrammetry Department, Konya,
Turkey

Surveying and Mapping School

06100 Cebeci, Ankara, Turkey

Technical University of Istanbul

Geodesy and Photogrammetry Department
Ayazaga, Istanbul, Turkey

Yildiz University

Geodesy and Photogrammetry Department,
Yildiz, Istanbul, Turkey

United Kingdom**Department of Earth Sciences**

University of Oxford, Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PR,
United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-01865 270708 Fax: (44)-01865 272000

Department of Geography and Topographic Science

University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ
United Kingdom
Phone: (44) 41 339 8855 Fax: (44) 41 330 4894

Department of Geomatic Engineering

University College London, Gower St., London WC1E
6BT, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-171-380-7028 Fax: (44)-171-380-0453

Department of Geomatics

University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle upon
tyne NE1 7RU, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-191-222-6447 Fax: (44)-191-222-8691

Department of land Surveying

University of East London, Longbridge Road
Dagenham, Essex RM8 2AS, United Kingdom
Phone: (44)-181-590-7722 Fax: (44)-181-590-7799

Institute of Engineering Surveying and Space Geodesy

University of Nottingham, University Park
Nottingham NG7 2RD, UK,
Phone: (44)-0115-951-3880 Fax: (44)-0115-951-3881

USA**Cornell University**

Department of Geological Sciences, Snee Hall, Ithaca,
NY 14853, USA

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Department of Earth, Atmosphere and Planetary
Science, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge
MA 02139, USA

Ohio State University

Department of Geodetic Science, 1958 Neil Avenue,
Columbus, OH 43210-1247, USA

Scripps Institution of Oceanography A-25

Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, La Jolla,
CA 92093, USA

State University of New York

Geophysics Program, Department of Geological

Sciences and Environmental Studies, Binghamton, NY
13902, USA

University of California

Department of Earth and Space Sciences, Los Angeles,
CA 90024, USA

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Polish Academy of Sciences, Astronomical Latitude
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Géomètre

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Vienna University of Technology
Gusshausstrasse 27-29, A-1040 Vienna, Austria
Email: pwald@fbgeo1.tuwien.ac.at

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IAG Central Bureau, c/o Department of Geophysics
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Denmark, Phone: +45 35320600,
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International Gravity Commission
Subcommission Western Europe
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