

Southern Ocean Clouds, Radiation, Aerosol Transport Experimental Study (SOCRATES) NSF/NCAR GV HIAPER Dropsonde Data Set

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2.0 Dataset Overview

The National Center for Atmospheric Research/Earth Observing Laboratory (NCAR/EOL) flew the NSF/NCAR Gulfstream-V HIAPER aircraft in the region around the Southern Ocean and released dropsondes (Figure 1) during Southern Ocean Clouds, Radiation, Aerosol Transport Experimental Study (SOCRATES) Intensive Observing Periods (IOPs). This data set includes the 109 quality controlled high vertical resolution (0.25-second wind and 0.5 second pressure/temperature/humidity) NSF/NCAR GV HIAPER dropsonde data released for the SOCRATES field phase (19 January to 24 February 2018).

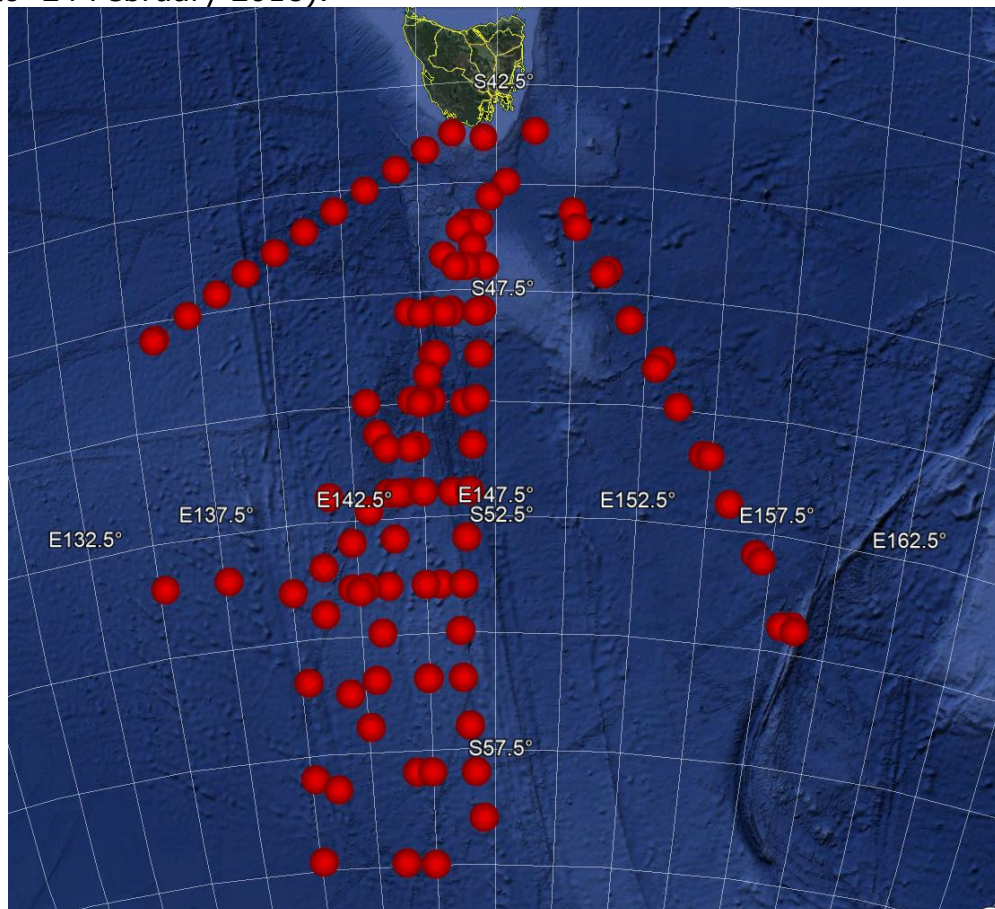


Figure 1. Location of the NSF/NCAR GV HIAPER dropsonde release points during SOCRATES.

3.0 Project Overview

The **Southern Ocean Clouds, Radiation, Aerosol Transport Experimental Study (SOCRATES)** is a research program to improve our understanding of clouds, aerosols, air-sea exchanges, and their interactions over the Southern Ocean. SOCRATES utilized the NSF/NCAR GV HIAPER aircraft based out of Hobart, Tasmania. There were additional projects occurring at the same time that were cooperating with SOCRATES, these included the DOE/ARM MARCUS (Measurements of Aerosols, Radiation, and Clouds over the Southern Ocean) project which used the RSV Aurora Australis, the DOE/ARM MICRE (Macquarie Island Cloud and Radiation Experiment) and the Australian CAPRICORN (Clouds, Aerosols, Precipitation Radiation and atmospheric Composition Over the southern ocean) project which utilized the RV Investigator. Further information on SOCRATES is available at the SOCRATES web site at NCAR/EOL: https://www.eol.ucar.edu/field_projects/socrates and information on the SOCRATES deployments is available at the SOCRATES Field Catalog: <http://catalog.eol.ucar.edu/socrates>.

4.0 EOL Sounding Composite (ESC) File Format Description

The ESC is a columnar ASCII format consisting of 15 header records for each sounding followed by the data records with associated data quality flags.

4.1 Header Records

The header records (15 total records) contain a variety of metadata about the sounding (i.e. location, time, radiosonde type, etc). The first five header lines contain information identifying the sounding, and have a rigidly defined form. The following 7 header lines are used for auxiliary information and comments about the sounding, and may vary from dataset to dataset. The last 3 header records contain header information for the data columns. Line 13 holds the field names, line 14 the field units, and line 15 contains dashes ('-' characters) delineating the extent of the field.

The file standard header lines are as follows:

Line	Label (padded to 35 char)	Contents
1	Data Type:	Description of the type and resolution of data
2	Project ID:	Short name for the field project
3	Release Site Type/Site ID:	Description of the release site.
4	Release Location (lon,lat,alt):	Location of the release site.
5	UTC Release Time (y,m,d,h,m,s):	Time of release.

The release location is given as:

lon (deg min), lat (deg min), lon (dec. deg), lat (dec. deg), alt (m)

Longitude in deg min is in the format: ddd mm.mm'W where ddd is the number of degrees (with leading zeros if necessary), mm.mm is the decimal number of minutes, and W represents W or E for west or east longitude, respectively. Latitude has the same format as longitude, except there are only two digits for degrees and N or S for north/south latitude.

The time of release is given as: yyyy, mm, dd, hh:nn:ss.

Where yyyy is the year, mm is the month, dd is the day of month, and hh:nn:ss are the UTC hour, minute, and second respectively.

The seven non-standard header lines may contain any label and contents. The labels are padded to 35 characters to match the standard header lines. Records for this data set include the following non-standard header lines:

Line	Label (padded to 35 char)	Contents
6	Sonde Id/Sonde Type	Serial number and type of radiosonde
7	Reference Launch Data Source/Time	
8	System Operator/Comments	
9	Post Processing Comments	

The nominal release time for these soundings is the same as the actual time.

4.2 Data Records

The data records each contain time from release, pressure, temperature, dew point, relative humidity, U and V wind components, wind speed and direction, ascent rate, balloon position data, altitude, and quality control flags (see the QC code description). Each data line contains 21 fields, separated by spaces, with a total width of 130 characters. The data are right-justified within the fields. All fields have one decimal place of precision, with the exception of latitude and longitude, which have three decimal places of precision. The contents and sizes of the 21 fields that appear in each data record are as follows:

Field	Width	Format	Parameter	Units	Missing Value
1	6	F6.1	Time since release	Seconds	9999.0
2	6	F6.1	Pressure	Millibars	9999.0
3	5	F5.1	Dry-bulb Temperature	Degrees C	999.0
4	5	F5.1	Dew Point Temperature	Degrees C	999.0
5	5	F5.1	Relative Humidity	Percent	999.0
6	6	F6.1	U Wind Comp	m/s	9999.0
7	6	F6.1	V Wind Comp	m/s	9999.0
8	5	F5.1	Wind speed	m/s	999.0
9	5	F5.1	Wind direction	Degrees	999.0
10	5	F5.1	Ascent Rate	m/s	999.0
11	8	F8.3	Longitude	Degrees	9999.0
12	7	F7.3	Latitude	Degrees	999.0
13	5	F5.1	Elevation Angle	Degrees	999.0
14	5	F5.1	Azimuth Angle	Degrees	999.0
15	7	F7.1	Geopotential Altitude	Meters	99999.0
16	4	F4.1	QC for Pressure	Code	99.0
17	4	F4.1	QC for Temperature	Code	99.0
18	4	F4.1	QC for Humidity	Code	99.0
19	4	F4.1	QC for U Wind	Code	99.0

20	4	F4.1	QC for V Wind	Code	99.0
21	4	F4.1	QC for Ascent Rate	Code	99.0

Fields 16 through 21 contain the data quality flags from the NCAR/Earth Observing Laboratory (EOL) sounding quality control procedures. The data quality flags are defined as follows:

Code	Description
1.0	Checked, datum seems physically reasonable. ("GOOD")
2.0	Checked, datum seems questionable on a physical basis. ("MAYBE")
3.0	Checked, datum seems to be in error. ("BAD")
4.0	Checked, datum is interpolated. ("ESTIMATED")
9.0	Checked, datum is missing. ("MISSING")
99.0	Unchecked (QC information is "missing".) ("UNCHECKED")

4.3 Data Specifics

The files contain wind data at 0.25 second and all other parameters at 0.5 second vertical intervals.

The data are in files by day, so all soundings for a particular day are concatenated into a single file ordered by time. The file naming convention is:

NCAR_GV_N677F_yyyymmdd.cls where yyyy is the year, mm is the month, and dd is the day of the month.

The NSF/NCAR GV HAIPER utilized Vaisala RD94 dropsondes (56) and Vaisala RD41 dropsondes (53) using GPS for windfinding during SOCRATES.

The RD41 dropsondes have an improved next generation Vaisala PTU module which have a faster response temperature sensor and an improved RH sensor. Additionally, all of the electronics have been updated, including a new 400 MHz transmitter and next generation Source GPS receiver for the measurement of winds.

The dropsonde type is specified in the header of each sounding in the "Sonde Id/Sonde Type:" record. The RD41 sondes are labeled RSS421 and the RD94 sondes are labeled RS904.

4.4 Sample Data

The following is a sample of the NSF/NCAR GV HAIPER high resolution dropsonde data in ESC format.

```

Data Type: AVAPS SOUNDING DATA, Channel 1/Descending
Project ID: SOCRATES
Release Site Type/Site ID: Gulfstream V/N677F
Release Location (lon,lat,alt): 145 48.54'E, 46 44.40'S, 145.809, -46.740, 6142.6
UTC Release Time (y,m,d,h,m,s): 2018, 01, 19, 01:32:20
Sonde Id/Sonde Type: 171330194/RSS421
Reference Launch Data Source/Time: IWGADTS Format (IWG1)/01:32:21
System Operator/Comments: Remote Operator/none, none
Post Processing Comments: Aspen V3.3-693; Created on 13 Sep 2018 17:37 UTC; Configuration mini-dropsonde
/
/
Nominal Release Time (y,m,d,h,m,s):2018, 01, 19, 01:32:20
Time Press Temp Dewpt RH Ucmp Vcmp spd dir Wcmp Lon Lat Ele Azi Alt Qp Qt Qrh Qu Qv QdZ
sec mb C C % m/s m/s m/s deg m/s deg deg deg deg m code code code code code code
-----
460.0 1010.1 11.5 5.6 66.8 9999.0 9999.0 999.0 999.0 999.0 9999.000 999.000 999.0 999.0 0.0 99.0 99.0 99.0 9.0 9.0 9.0

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4.5 Station List

Site ID	WMO ID	Site Name	Country	Latitude	Longitude	Elev (m)
N677F	N/A	GV HAIPER	N/A	Mobile	Mobile	Mobile

5.0 Data Quality Control Procedures

1. Data underwent significant quality control at NCAR/EOL prior to what is described below. For full details on that quality control processing see [Young 2018](#).
2. Each sounding was converted from its original format into the ESC format described above.
3. Each sounding was passed through a set of automated data quality checks which included basic gross limit checks as well as rate of change checks. This is further described in Section 4.1.
4. Each sounding was visually examined utilizing the NCAR/EOL XQC sounding quality control software. This is further described in Section 4.2.

5.1 Automated Data Quality Checks

This data set was passed through a set of automated data quality checks. This procedure includes both gross limit checks on all parameters as well as rate-of-change checks on temperature, pressure, and ascent rate. A version of these checks is described in Loehrer et al. (1996) and Loehrer et al. (1998).

5.1.1 Gross Limit Checks

These checks were conducted on each sounding and the data quality flags in the ESC files were adjusted as appropriate. Only the data point under examination was flagged. All checks also produced warning messages that specified the location of the problem and the severity of the issue. These warning messages were then summarized statistically and examined to determine any consistent issues.

For this data set NCAR/EOL conducted the following gross limit checks. In the table P = pressure, T = temperature, RH = relative humidity, U = U wind component, V = V wind component, B= bad, and Q = questionable.

Parameter	Check	Parameter(s) Flagged	Flag Applied
Pressure	<0 or > 1050	P	B
Altitude	< 0 or >40000	P, T, RH	Q
Temperature	< -90 or > 45	T	B
Dew Point	< -99.9 or > 33	RH	Q
	> T	T, RH	Q
Wind Speed	< 0 or > 100	U, V	Q

	> 150	U, V	B
U Wind	< 0 or > 100	U	Q
	> 150	U	B
V Wind	< 0 or > 100	V	Q
	> 150	V	B
Wind Direction	< 0 or > 360	U, V	B
Ascent Rate	< -10 or > 10	P, T, RH	Q

5.1.2 Vertical Consistency Checks

These checks were conducted on each sounding and the data quality flags in the ESC files were adjusted as appropriate. These checks were started at the surface and compared each neighboring data record. In the case of checks that ensured that the values increased/decreased as expected, only the data point under examination was flagged. However, for the other checks, all of the data points used in the examination were flagged. All items within the table are as previously defined. All checks also produced warning messages that specified the location of the problem and the severity of the issue. These warning messages were then summarized statistically and examined to determine any consistent issues.

Parameter	Check	Parameter(s) Flagged	Flag Applied
Time	Decreasing/equal	None	None.
Altitude	Decreasing/equal	P, T, RH	Q
Pressure	Increasing/equal	P, T, TH	Q
	> 1mb/s or < -1mb/s	P, T, TH	Q
	> 2mb/s or < -2mb/s	P, T, TH	B
Temperature	< -15°C/km	P, T, RH	Q
	< -30°C/km	P, T, RH	B
	> 50°C/km	P, T, RH	Q
	> 100°C/km	P, T, RH	B
Ascent Rate	> 3m/s or < -3m/s	P	Q
	> 5m/s or < -5m/s	P	B

5.2 Visual Data Quality Checks

Each sounding was visually examined using the NCAR/EOL XQC sounding data quality control software. This software allows the user to view a skew-t/log-p diagram of each sounding and apply data quality flags as appropriate. The user can zoom in on sections of soundings for detailed examination and can adjust the data quality flags for an individual point, sections of soundings, or entire soundings for each parameter individually. The software also allows the user to override the quality flags applied by the automated procedure.

5.3 Data Quality Issues of Note

The data quality control procedures outlined above allows us to identify and, in some cases, resolve issues that could potentially impact research performed using these data sets. The following issues were noted in these soundings.

One sounding was classified as a “fast fall drop” and four soundings as “partial fast fall drops” where the parachute failed to properly deploy leading to the dropsonde

falling at an accelerated rate. Within these soundings the GPS wind measurements can be unreliable due to the irregular motion of the dropsonde and there may also be a lag in the response of the temperature and relative humidity sensors. Caution is urged in using the data from these soundings:

20180129002520 – fast fall
20180218020346 – partial fast fall
20180218022756 – partial fast fall
20180220003030 – partial fast fall
20180224040428 – partial fast fall

Two soundings experienced problems with the GPS receiver that resulted in some loss of GPS data including wind speed and direction:

20180124020006 – no GPS above 1968m
20180220013138 – no GPS above 2116m

6.0 References

Loehrer, S. M., T. A. Edmands, and J. A. Moore, 1996: TOGA COARE upper-air sounding data archive: development and quality control procedures. *Bull. Amer. Meteor. Soc.*, 77, 2651-2671.

Loehrer, S. M., S. F. Williams, and J. A. Moore, 1998: Results from UCAR/JOSS quality control of atmospheric soundings from field projects. Preprints, Tenth Symposium on Meteorological Observations and Instrumentation, Phoenix, AZ, *Amer. Meteor. Soc.*, 1-6.

Voemel, H., K. Young, and T. F. Hock, 2016: NCAR GPS Dropsonde Humidity Dry Bias. NCAR Technical Note NCAR/TN-531+STR, 8 pp, doi:10.5065/D6XS5SGX.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5065/D6XS5SGX>

Young, K., T. Hock and C. Martin, 2014: DEEPWAVE 2014 Dropsonde Data Quality Report. Accessed at: <http://data.eol.ucar.edu/datafile/nph-get/379.033/readme.Deepwave2014.GVdropsonde.pdf>