## ATOMIC WEAPONS RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENI

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# World Seismicity Maps <br> Suitable for the Study of <br> Seismic and Geographical Regionalisation (UK UNCLASSIFIED) 

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## SUMMARY

This report consists of a series of maps showing the seismicity of the earth with the epicentres computed by the International Seismological Centre (ISC) for the 22 year period 1964-1985 but using body-wave ( $m_{b}$ ) magnitudes computed by the "maximum-likelihood" method. These maps are intended to be used by the Working Group on Regionalisation of the Commission on Practice of the International Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth's Interior (IASPEI) which has the task of redefining the regionalisation of the earth. But it is hoped that they will be useful to all who study the current seismicity of the active areas of the earth.

There are two appendices to this report. The first appendix proposes a regionalisation of the earth based on the current Flinn and Engdahl geographical regions but still incorporating the Gutenberg and Richter seismic regions and also allowing a further subdivision of the geographical regions for use by local seismological agencies. The second appendix summarises the scheme for the regionalisation of the earth as agreed by the Working Group in Vancouver, Canada in August 1987. The proposed scheme maintains the existing Flinn and Engdahl regions with a few additional regions with the third tier of local regions being devised by the Working Group themselves.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the 1940's, Gutenberg and Richter [1] published the first systematic set of maps showing the seismicity of the earth using only earthquakes which had been instrumentally recorded. These maps include a world map divided up into 50 regions and showing the main areas of seismicity.

In the 1960's, Flinn and Engdahl [2] proposed dividing the earth into about 730 separate regions delineated by tectonic, geographical, and political boundaries. Their proposal was quickly accepted by all the major seismological agencies. Flinn and Engdahl's [3] framework for regionalisation (which is referred to as the "F-E Code" in the Universal Decimal Classification system used by libraries) closely follows Gutenberg and Richter's 50 seismic areas so that their geographical regions form a mosaic of smaller regions within a seismic region.

In the 1980's, the Commission on Practice of IASPEI asked Dr Flinn [4] to review the current definition of the F-E Code and to form a Working Group on Regionalisation to produce a new standard for the regionalisation of the earth. One of the authors of this report (JBY) is a member of the Working Group.

Maps showing the seismicity of the earth, $[$ eg, $1,5,6,7,8$ ] are not new but no one appears to have published seismicity maps of the earth in relation to the F-E Code. But as one of the original aims of the F-E Code was to assign a number and name to regions of high seismicity such maps would obviously be useful to those attempting a revision of regionalisation. This report presents such seismicity maps.

Work on extending and enhancing the current F-E Code, in particular to allow certain "classifiers" [9] of the regions has already been published. That report points to particular regions of the F-E Code that are, at best, misleading and at worst, wrong. The maps presented contain only region numbers and "classifier" plots with a full table of numbers, names, and "classifiers". It was known before that report was published that the seismicity of the earth superimposed on the regions illustrates most of the problems and shortcomings of the current F-E code. In this report the same 12 maps which show the region numbers are reproduced but with seismicity added. However, these maps cover too large an area for the requirements of the Working Group on Regionalisation so each regional map has been subdivided into four producing a further 48 maps.

One of the requirements of the $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{E}$ Code was that region boundaries follow integral lines of latitude and longitude. The original maps [2] published in 1965 used a cylindrical projection with a degree of latitude and longitude at the same scale thus producing distortion towards the poles. We see no reason not to continue using this projection as it provides the necessary rectangular basis for regionalisation. The inclusion of coastlines (from a database of nearly 60,000 latitude and longitude points) first used in the "classifiers" report [9] clearly shows the polar distortions. A cylindrical projection is also simple in terms of computing and plotting which is a significant factor when searching a database of over 100,000 earthquakes.

To complete the picture of global seismicity, a world map with the same seismicity as plotted on the regional maps superimposed on the seismic regions of the $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{E}$ Code is presented. Eight further maps some of which have been used in various forms for many years are also included. These maps are plotted on an azimuthal great circle projection [10] showing two hemispheres of the world on arbitrary centres with the seismicity split into shallow earthquakes and intermediate and deep earthquakes. No regions have been included in these eight maps. The maps have been used for display purposes and have been used in various publications [eg, 11, 12] but this is the first time they have been published as a set.

All the maps have been produced by computer and drawn on a Versatec plotter with a 200 dots to the inch capability giving a uniform display but perhaps not providing the quality of the maps in the previous "classifiers" report [9] which were produced on an FR80 graphics plotter. However, for the set of 48 maps of the seismicity of the earth for use by the Working Group on Regionalisation the Versatec plotter provides an adequate display.

The earthquakes used are those published by the ISC [eg, 13] for the 22 year period 1964-1985 inclusive. Only those earthquakes which have sufficient station readings for the ISC to recompute the hypocentres and which have assigned magnitudes greater than $m_{b} 4.0$ are plotted. Above this magnitude, six levels ( $\mathrm{m}_{\mathrm{b}}$ 4.0-4.5; 4.5-5.0; 5.0-5.5; 5.5-6.0; 6.0-6.5; $6.5+$ ) are indicated by the size of dot. This dot is a square if the earthquake is shallow (ie, the depth is less than 60 km ) or a diamond if it is intermediate or deep (greater than 60 km ). The magnitudes used have been recomputed using the "maximum-likelihood" method [14, 15] which removes much of the bias present in standard magnitude estimates. In general, large ( $m_{b}$ \{ISC\} $6.0+$ ) magnitudes remain unchanged by this procedure but there is a progressive reduction at lower values reaching an
average of 0.2 to 0.3 around $m_{b}$ \{ISC\} 4.5. The largest changes are usually for earthquakes with spuriously high conventional magnitudes based on a small number of station readings. The above procedure gives an improvement in the resolution of the seismicity plots because many poorly recorded (and hence poorly located) earthquakes are either removed or given less emphasis. In addition the use of a lower magnitude limit of $m_{b} 4.0$ means that the strong regional changes in the number of epicentres resulting from variation in station network coverage are reduced. Hence, the world seismicity presented here contains about 104,000 earthquakes from the nearly 350,000 published by the ISC in the 22 year period 1964-1985.

The detail in the seismicity plotted on the computer-drawn maps showing both large and small tectonic features reflects the improvements in seismology over the last 50 years. Gutenberg and Richter's one tier system of seismic regions was based on large earthquakes for which epicentres were thought to be accurate to a degree. When Flinn and Engdahl introduced their two tier F-E Code Electronic Data Processing (EDP) computers - had taken over the task of calculating epicentres with an apparent improvement in the accuracy of the result. With earthquake epicentres from the ISC for the 22 year period 1964-1985 and improved magnitude estimates computed by the "maximum-likelihood" method the seismicity of the earth is traced in greater detail on the regional maps than ever before. Large tectonic features can be encompassed by minor changes to the current $F$-E code but the small scale features require sub-division of the present geographical regions. There is a need to define new areas not only now but in the future. A third tier of regionalisation meets this requirement.

A proposal for a three tier framework of seismic and geographical regionalisation is presented in appendix $A$ and the actual three tier framework as agreed by the Working Group is presented in appendix B.

## 3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the Director of the ISC for permission to use the ISC Bulletin Data and his staff for their help in the preparation of the earthquake database.

## APPENDIX A

## A THREE TIER FRAMEWORK OF <br> SEISMIC AND GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONALISATION

This proposal for a three tier framework of seismic and geographical regionalisation is presented here for consideration and discussion by the Working Group on Regionalisation of the Commission on Practice of IASPEI and is in no way intended to be binding on either the Working Group or the authors.

## A1. First tier - large or seismic regions

The basic structure of the three tier system of the regionalisation of the earth is that defined in the current F-E framework [3] which is based on the work of Gutenberg and Richter [1]. Minor adjustments of boundaries are necessary to follow changes made to the second tier of small or geographical regions. The numbering remains unchanged from 01 to 50 .

A2. Second tier - small or geographical regions
The second tier is the existing F-E framework of geographical regions which has been corrected using the ISC epicentres with the "maximum-likelihood" magnitudes to trace the significant seismicity taking into account the modern ideas of plate tectonics and heat flow and using data like tectonic, geographic, bathymetric, political, and other boundaries. The major part of the current F-E regionalisation of the earth should remain after correction and minor adjustments, and the splitting up of some of the larger regions in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China, and in the Southern Hemisphere. Peculiarities like one degree regions and boundary areas are tidied up and placed in the third tier of local regions. Small or geographical regions are numbered within each large or seismic region starting at 01 or 001 in some sort of logical order but not of necessity and not necessarily in sequence. To identify a small or geographical region uniquely it is necessary to append this number to the large or seismic region number. This method allows easy addition and deletion of small or geographical regions within the large or seismic region.

A3. Third tier - local reqions
A third tier is added to the F-E framework allowing local seismological agencies to allocate local names, numbers to areas of interest, minor seismicity, etc. As each large or seismic region is made up of a mosaic of small or geographical regions, each small or geographical region is made up of a mosaic of local regions. Numbering is arbitrary but would be two, perhaps three or four, digits starting at 02 (01 being reserved for the majority of the small or geographical region left after subdividing and also to indicate that there is a third tier, see A4). These local regions are defined outside the jurisdiction of the Working Group which is responsible only for the first and second tiers of the framework of regionalisation. However, if it is shown that a local region in a third tier splitting should be used as a small or geographical region in the second tier then the provision for easy addition and deletion can be applied. Classifiers [9] would be introduced in this third tier, again relieving the Working Group of the need to decide on their specification.

To illustrate the three tier framework of seismic and geographical regionalisation the first region of the current $F-E$ Code is chosen. This region is "Central Alaska" in the "ALASKA - ALEUTIAN ARC".

On the three tier framework --
Large or seismic region 01 is "ALASKA - ALEUTIAN ARC"
Small or geographical region 01.000 is also "ALASKA - ALEUTIAN ARC"
Local region 01.000:0000 is also "ALASKA - ALEUTIAN ARC"
Small or geographical region 01.001 is "Central Alaska"
Local region 01.001:0000 is also "Central Alaska"
Local region 01.001:0001 would also be "Central Alaska" (indicating the majority of a geographical region left after subdivision)

A region defined by a local agency would appear as 01.001:0002, etc (with names which have been assigned by a local agency)

Classifiers on a geographical region would appear as 01.001:0000, SC
(the SC indicating the Seismicity and Continental Classifiers).
A5. Alternative numbering

|  | $2.3: 4$ digit | 2 digits | integer |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Large or seismic region | 01 | 01 | 01 |
| Small or geographical region | 01.001 | 01.01 | 0101 |
| Local region | $01.001: 0001$ | $01.01: 01$ | 010101 |
| Classifiers on local region | $01.001: 0001$, SC | $01.01: 01$, SC | 010101 SC |
| A6. $\quad$ Advantages |  |  |  |

The main advantage of the three tier framework is the maintenance of links with the current $F-E$ Code. The historical link with the seismic regions of Gutenberg and Richter is kept and it is hoped that there remains some similarity with the existing $F-E$ Code. The introduction of local regions gives local seismological agencies full control over naming, numbering, classifiers, and the shape of local areas without having to seek the approval of the Working Group.

The insistence on an easy method of adding and deleting small or geographical regions is a major improvement over the existing $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{E}$ Code.

This new system of regionalisation will mean less work for the Working Group and hence quicker publication of the new standard.

A7. Disadvantages
The major disadvantage of the three tier framework which is also inherent in the current $F-E$ Code stems from the original definition of the seismic regions by Gutenberg and Richter. Sometimes there is a need to know which regions border a particular small or geographical region. In
the current $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{E}$ Code the geographical region numbers are usually close together unless the neighbouring region is in a different seismic region. In the three tier framework this problem is further aggravated. Only good maps of the regionalisation can indicate neighbouring small or geographical regions.

Another disadvantage of the three tier framework is the lengthy numeric code needed to define a region and the additional definition tables that are required involving effort from local seismological agencies.

## APPENDIX B

THE THREE TIER FRAMEWORK OF
SEISMIC AND GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONALISATION
AS DECIDED BY THE WORKING GROUP IN VANCOUVER, CANADA
The three tier framework of seismic and geographical regionalisation presented here is based on the discussions and decisions made by the Working Group on Regionalisation of the Commission on Practice of IASPEI in Vancouver, Canada in August 1987 and may be altered at subsequent meetings.

## B1.

## First tier - seismic reqions

The basic structure of the three tier system of the regionalisation of the earth is that defined in the current F-E framework [3] which is based on the work of Gutenberg and Richter [1]. No changes will be made to the definition of the regions and the numbering remains unchanged from 01 to 50 .

## B2. Second tier - geographical regions

The second tier is the existing F-E framework of geographical regions which remains unchanged except for the addition of four new regions [16] to correct some of the errors and mistakes as outlined in the "classifiers" report [9]. All other problems are relegated for correction in the third tier. Numbering remains unchanged from 001 to 729 with the four new regions numbered 730 to 733.

B3. Third tier - local regions
A third tier is to be added to the F-E framework to allocate local names, numbers to areas of interest, to delineate political boundaries, seismicity, etc. As each seismic region is made up of a mosaic of geographical regions, each geographical region is made up of a mosaic of local regions. These local regions are to be defined as polygons with sides no longer than one degree and must be completely contained within the geographical region. Hence, areas spanning more than one geographical region would be defined by two (or more) local regions with possibly the same name but with different numbers. Numbering is arbitrary but would be four digits starting at 0002 ( 0001 being reserved for the majority of the geographical region left after subdividing and also to indicate that there is a third tier, see B4) up to 9999 for each geographical region. The Working Group is to define these local regions, send them to local agencies for review and comment, and then, hopefully, to reconcile any differences. Classifiers [9] may be introduced in this thrd tier but the Working Group has deferred the decision on inclusion till their next meeting.

B4. Example
To illustrate this three tier framework of seismic and geographical regionalisation the first region of the current $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{E}$ Code is chosen. This region is "Central Alaska" in the "ALASKA - ALEUTIAN ARC".

On this three tier framework --
Seismic region 01 stays as "ALASKA - ALEUTIAN ARC"

Geographical region 001 stays as "Central Alaska"
Local region 001.0000 is also "Central Alaska"
Local region 1.0001 would also be "Central Alaska" (indicating the majority of a geographical region left after subdivision)

A local region would appear as 1.0002 , etc., up to 1.9999 (but not necessarily in order and with names up to 40 characters)

Classifiers on a local region could appear as 1.0001 ,SC (the SC indicating the Seismicity and Continental Classifiers).

## B5. Advantages

The main advantage of this three tier framework is that the current $F-E$ Code is retained with the only proposed changes being the addition of four new geographical regions with corresponding corrections to three existing ones. Retention of the $F-E$ code means that seismological agencies and other users who wish to maintain existing computer software can do so with minimum disruption. It is proposed to keep local region definitions in sub-files so that users not needing to use local regions will not have to sort through large amounts of data.

## B6. Disadvantages

The major disadvantage of this three tier framework is the lengthy numeric code needed to define the series of local regions within a geographical region. However, as local region definitions will be kept in sub-files users can choose which local regions they need to hold for their own work.

Another disadvantage of this three tier framework is that most of the problems with the current $F-E$ code not corrected by the proposed four additional regions remain. It will be up to users to decide whether to accept the shortcomings of the current two tier framework or to use corrected region information which will be available in the third tier of local regions.

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Map 1 F-E Seismic regions plotted on a repeating cylindrical projection of the earth centred on longitude $40^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$ and showing the global pattern of the seismicity.

Maps 2-9 Azimuthal equidistant maps centred on arbitrary points showing the distribution of shallow ( $<60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes (+ symbol) and intermediate and deep ( $>60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes (x symbol) for two hemispheres of the earth but without any F-E regions.

Map 2
Map centred on $0^{\circ} \mathrm{N} \quad 20^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of shallow ( 600 km ) earthquakes.
Map 3 Map centred on $0^{\circ} \mathrm{N} 160^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of shallow ( 600 km ) earthquakes.
Map 4 Map centred on the North Pole $\left(90^{\circ} \mathrm{N}\right)$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of shallow ( $<60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes.
Map 5 Map centred on the South pole $\left(90^{\circ} \mathrm{S}\right)$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of shallow ( $<60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes.
Map 6 Map centred on $0^{\circ} \mathrm{N} \quad 20^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of intermediate and deep ( $>60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes.
Map 7 Map centred on $0^{\circ} \mathrm{N} 160^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of intermediate and deep ( $>60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes.
Map 8 Map centred on the North Pole $\left(90^{\circ} \mathrm{N}\right)$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of intermediate and deep ( $>60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes.
Map 9 Map centred on the South pole $\left(90^{\circ} \mathrm{S}\right)$ with radius $110^{\circ}$ showing the distribution of intermediate and deep ( $>60 \mathrm{~km}$ ) earthquakes.

Maps 10-21 F-E Geographical regions plotted on a series of two overlapping cylindrical plots, one for north of the Equator and the other for south of the Equator, centred at selected longitudes covering the whole earth. These maps are identical to Maps 2-13 in the "classifiers" report [9] with the addition of the seismicity and the special logo plotted.

Map 10 North of the Equator centred on longitude $145^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$.
Map 11 South of the Equator centred on longitude $145^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$.
Map 12
Map 13
Map 14
Map 15
Map 16
Map 17
Map 18
Map 19
Map 20
Map 21
South of the Equator centred on longitude $145{ }^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$.
North of the Equator centred on longitude $85^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. South of the Equator centred on longitude $85^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. North of the Equator centred on longitude $25^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. South of the Equator centred on longitude $25^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. North of the Equator centred on longitude $25^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. South of the Equator centred on longitude $25^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. South of the Equator centred on longitude ${ }^{25}{ }^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. South of the Equator centred on longitude $85^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. North of the Equator centred on longitude $145^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. South of the Equator centred on longitude $145^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$.

Maps 22-69 F-E Geographical regions plotted on a series of overlapping cylindrical plots similar to Maps 10-21 but at twice the grid spacing and hence a quarter of the area. The maps which show the fine detail of the seismicity are presented in four "strips" from $180^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$ to $180^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$ so covering the whole earth.

Map 22
Map 23
Map 24
Map 25
Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $163^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $135^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $105^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $75^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$.

Map 26
Map 27
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Map 66
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Map 68
Map 69

Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $45^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$.
Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $15^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$.
Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $15^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$.
Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ and longitude $45^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$.
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Centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{S}$ and longitude $135^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$.
centred on latitude $65^{\circ} \mathrm{S}$ and longitude $163^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$.
MAP NO. 1-- ISC DATA 1964-1985






































































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