

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Motivation	1
1.2	Goal	3
1.3	Prior publications	4
2	GRACE mission fundamentals	5
2.1	Mission success	5
2.2	Orbit	6
2.3	Measurement principle	6
2.3.1	Precise orbit determination	7
2.3.2	K-band inter-satellite ranging	8
2.3.3	Precise accelerometry	10
2.4	Sensors and instruments	11
2.5	Data levels	12
2.6	Reference frames	13
2.7	Gravity field models	14
3	Characteristics of the GRACE attitude determination and control	17
3.1	Introduction to attitude determination and control	17
3.2	Attitude determination sensors	19
3.2.1	Coarse Earth/Sun sensor	19
3.2.2	Magnetometer	21
3.2.3	Inertial measurement unit	21
3.2.4	Star camera	23
3.3	Characteristics of the GRACE star cameras	24
3.3.1	The star camera sensor	24
3.3.2	The star camera measurement principle	25
3.3.3	Star camera operation	27
3.3.4	Star camera measurement accuracy	28
3.3.5	Inter-boresight angle variations	33
3.4	Attitude actuators	34
3.4.1	Magnetic torquers	34
3.4.2	Cold gas thrusters	38
4	Inter-satellite pointing	43
4.1	Geometric interpretation of the inter-satellite pointing	44
4.2	In-flight determination of the inter-satellite pointing	45
4.3	On-ground determination of the inter-satellite pointing	46
4.4	Characteristics of the inter-satellite pointing variations	47
4.5	Antenna offset correction	51
4.6	Inconsistency of the QKS, QSA and VKB calibration parameters	52
4.6.1	KBR calibration maneuver and the calibration parameters	52
4.6.2	Pointing bias	53
4.6.3	Impact of the pointing bias on the antenna offset correction	54

5	Improved star camera attitude data	59
5.1	The GRACE SCA1B RL02 data	59
5.2	Star camera data combination methods	60
5.2.1	Combination method based on a weight matrix	62
5.2.2	SCA combination by merging exclusively the boresight axes	63
5.2.3	Mutual comparison of the combination methods	66
5.3	Improvement of the SCA1B RL02 attitude data	68
5.4	Effect of the improved SCA data on the GRACE fundamental observations	71
5.4.1	Effect on the KBR observations	71
5.4.2	Effect on the ACC observations	73
5.4.3	Effect on the GPS observations	74
5.5	Effect of the improved SCA data on the monthly gravity field models	75
5.6	Further options for GRACE attitude data processing	77
6	Attitude determination and mission lifetime	79
6.1	Accuracy of inter-satellite pointing angles derived from single SCA data	80
6.2	Propellant consumption dependence on the selected primary star camera	82
6.3	Options for propellant saving	85
7	Attitude determination and the future inter-satellite ranging missions	89
7.1	The experience from GRACE	90
7.2	The challenge for GRACE Follow-On	92
7.3	The challenge for future missions	94
8	Conclusions	99
	Appendices	103
A	Reference frames	103
A.1	Satellite panels	103
A.2	Satellite Frame	103
A.3	Star Camera Frame	104
A.4	Accelerometer Frame	105
A.5	Science Reference Frame	105
A.6	K-Frame	106
A.7	Line-of-Sight Frame	106
A.8	Common Reference Frame	107
A.9	Inertial frame	108
A.10	Terrestrial frame	108
A.11	GRACE time	108
B	Attitude representation	109
B.1	Direction cosine matrix	109
B.2	Quaternions	110
B.3	Roll, pitch, yaw	110
C	Quaternions	113
C.1	Defintion	113
C.2	Operations with quaternions	114
C.3	Quaternion as rotation operator	115
D	Auxiliary computations	119
D.1	Inter-boresight angle	119
D.2	β' angle	121
D.3	Argument of latitude	122

Bibliography	125
List of figures	133
List of tables	135
List of acronyms	137
Acknowledgements	139