New Observations of Stratospheric N$_2$O$_5$

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Abstract

The unequivocal detection of \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) in the stratosphere was reported by Toon et al. (1986, 1987) based on measurements of the absorption by the \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) bands at 1246 and 1720 cm\(^{-1}\) in solar occultation spectra recorded at sunrise near 47°S latitude by the Atmospheric Trace Molecule Spectroscopy (ATMOS) experiment during the Spacelab 3 (SL3) shuttle mission (April 29-May 6, 1985). In this work, we report additional measurements and analysis of stratospheric \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) derived from the ATMOS/SL3 spectra. The primary results are the detection and measurement of \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) absorption at sunset in the lower stratosphere, the inversion of a precise (~10%) \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) sunrise vertical distribution between 25.5- and 37.5-km altitude, and the identification and measurement of absorption by the \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) 743-cm\(^{-1}\) band at sunrise. Assuming \( 4.32 \times 10^{-17} \) and \( 4.36 \times 10^{-17} \) cm\(^{-1}\)/molecule cm\(^{-2}\) respectively for the integrated intensities of the 1246- and 743-cm\(^{-1}\) bands at stratospheric temperatures, retrieved volume mixing ratios in parts per billion by volume (ppbv) at sunrise (47°S latitude) are 1.32 ± 0.34 at 37.5 km, 1.53 ± 0.35 at 35.5 km, 1.63 ± 0.36 at 33.5 km, 1.60 ± 0.34 at 31.5 km, 1.43 ± 0.30 at 29.5 km, 1.15 ± 0.24 at 27.5 km, and 0.73 ± 0.15 at 25.5 km. Retrieved VMRs in ppbv at sunset (30°N latitude) are 0.13 ± 0.05 at 29.5 km, 0.14 ± 0.05 at 27.5 km, and 0.10 ± 0.04 at 25.5 km. Quoted error limits (1 sigma) include the error in the assumed band intensities (~20%). Within the error limits of the measurements, the inferred mixing ratios at sunrise agree with diurnal photochemical model predictions obtained by two groups using current photochemical data. The measured mixing ratios at sunset are lower than the model predictions with differences of about a factor of 2 at 25-km altitude.
1. Introduction

Nitrogen pentoxide ($N_2O_5$) is an important temporary reservoir of stratospheric odd nitrogen, which can destroy ozone through catalytic reactions involving NO and NO$_2$ [Crutzen, 1970]. $N_2O_5$ is produced at night by a three body reaction of NO and NO$_2$. During daytime $N_2O_5$ is slowly destroyed with a time scale on the order of hours to days below 40 km [Brasseur et al., 1987].

Following two tentative observations [Roscoe, 1982; Evans, 1986], $N_2O_5$ was identified unambiguously through simultaneous sunrise measurements of the broad, unresolved absorption envelopes of two $N_2O_5$ features, the $\nu_{12}$ band in the 1230 to 1260 cm$^{-1}$ region and the overlapping $\nu_1$ and $\nu_{11}$ bands in the 1680 to 1760 cm$^{-1}$ region [Toon et al., 1986; Toon, 1987]. These features were detected in 0.015-cm$^{-1}$ resolution (apodized) solar occultation spectra recorded from orbit by the Atmospheric Trace Molecule Spectroscopy (ATMOS) Fourier transform spectrometer during the Spacelab 3 (SL3) shuttle mission (April 29-May 6, 1986). The ATMOS measurements, obtained at sunrise and sunset, indicated strong diurnal variation of stratospheric $N_2O_5$. Subsequent midnight to predawn spectroscopic observations obtained in emission at an apodized resolution of 0.044 cm$^{-1}$ also showed the $\nu_{12}$ band of $N_2O_5$ [Kunde et al., 1988].

In the present study, we report further analysis of the ATMOS/SL3 spectra to obtain quantitative information on stratospheric $N_2O_5$. The most important new result is the detection of weak absorption by the $N_2O_5 \nu_{12}$ band at sunset in the lower stratosphere, confirming model predictions that not all of this molecule is photodissociated during the day except in polar regions during the extended daylight of summer (see, for example, Herman [1979], Fabian et al. [1982], and Brasseur et al. [1987]). In addition, we have derived refined measurements of
the absorption by the $N_2O_5 \nu_{12}$ band at sunrise. These measurements have been used to invert a precise vertical profile distribution between 25.5 and 37.5 km altitude. We also report the identification of the broad, unresolved envelope of another $N_2O_5$ feature, the overlapping $\nu_3$ and $\nu_{14}$ bands centered at 743 cm$^{-1}$ [Hisatsune et al., 1962], in a series of stratospheric spectra recorded at sunrise.

2. Experimental

The ATMOS instrument consists basically of a fast scanning double-passed Michelson interferometer, a suntracker and telescope, and a HgCdTe detector cooled to 77 K by a split Stirling-cycle cooler. Spectral coverage was defined prior to each occultation by selecting in real time one of four overlapping broadband interference filters covering altogether 600 to 4800 cm$^{-1}$. A "notch" filter was used during a single sunrise occultation to record spectra of the 600 to 750 cm$^{-1}$ and 2000 to 2500 cm$^{-1}$ regions. Every 2.2 seconds, a two-sided, 800,000-point solar interferogram with a maximum path difference of 47.5 cm was recorded, yielding spectra with an unapodized resolution of 0.01 cm$^{-1}$. From the Spacelab 3 orbital altitude of ~360 km, this spacing in time corresponded to successive tangent height differences of ~4.1 km in the upper atmosphere. This spacing was reduced in the lower stratosphere and troposphere by the drift of the suntracker field of view toward the upper limb of the "flattened" solar disk at high zenith angles. ATMOS spectra were recorded during 19 occultations, 12 sunsets between 25.6°N and 32.7°N latitude and 7 sunrises between 46.7°S and 49.0°S latitude, from April 29 to May 1, 1985. Additional details of the instrument and its operation during the Spacelab 3 mission have been described by Farmer and Raper [1986] and Farmer et al. [1987].
ATMOS spectra are derived from the inverse Fourier transform of two-sided interferograms with the same central fringe measurement. The intensities at each wavenumber in the low sun (atmospheric) spectra are subsequently ratioed to a corresponding value in a high sun (exo-atmospheric) spectrum to eliminate solar features and to remove the wavelength dependence of the instrumental response and the solar flux. Additional details of the processing of the ATMOS data and the spectral analysis software will be described in a future publication (R. H. Norton, unpublished results, 1989).

In the present analysis, we used the Spacelab 3 spectra recorded with filter 1 (600 to 1200 cm\(^{-1}\)) and filter 2 (1100 to 2000 cm\(^{-1}\)). Table 1 gives measurement parameters for each of the occultations. Because of the weakness of the N\(_2\)O\(_5\) absorption at sunset, spectra recorded at approximately equal tangent heights from three sunset (SS) occultations (SS02, SS05, and SS08 for filter 1; SS03, SS07, and SS12 for filter 2) were coadded to obtain sets of zonal average sunset spectra with improved signal-to-noise ratios of -400 in filter 1 and -300 in filter 2.

Pressures and temperatures assumed in the analysis were derived from the ATMOS filter 3 spectra (1580-3400 cm\(^{-1}\) region) by analyzing isolated absorption lines of gases with well-known atmospheric volume mixing ratios (CO\(_2\) and N\(_2\)). The temperature versus pressure distributions retrieved from the four filter 3 sunset occultations were found to be very similar, and, for this reason, they were combined to obtain a zonal average pressure-temperature distribution for -28°N latitude. The same averaging procedure could not be followed for -47°S latitude because only a single filter 3 sunrise (SR) occultation, SR02, was recorded in the southern hemisphere. The northern hemisphere zonal average or the single southern hemisphere pressure versus temperature distribution from
filter 3 was adopted, as appropriate, in the analysis of the filter 1 and 2 spectra since only less favorable lines were available for retrievals in these spectral regions. Assuming these distributions, tangent pressures of the individual filter 1 and 2 spectra were then determined by either spectral fitting isolated CO$_2$ lines with temperature-insensitive intensities or extrapolating altitude spacings based on the mission ephemeris. Additional details of the pressure-temperature analysis are described by Rinsland et al. [1987] and Gunson et al. [1989].

3. Analysis

Laboratory spectra recorded at 0.02 cm$^{-1}$ resolution [Murcray et al., 1984] show that both the 1246-cm$^{-1}$ and 1720-cm$^{-1}$ N$_2$O$_5$ bands appear as broad, unresolved features at the resolution of the ATMOS instrument, with no evidence for fine structure. Similarly, unpublished 0.005-cm$^{-1}$ resolution laboratory spectra of the 743 cm$^{-1}$ N$_2$O$_5$ band recorded at Kitt Peak also show no fine structure (E. Cohen, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, private communication, 1989). In stratospheric spectra, each of the broad N$_2$O$_5$ features is superimposed on the absorption by a large number of lines produced by molecules such as CH$_4$, N$_2$O, CO$_2$, and HNO$_3$ (see Toon et al. [1986], Figure 1; Toon [1987], Figures 1 and 2; Kunde et al. [1988], Figures 1 and 2). Because of high spectral resolution of the ATMOS data, it is possible to locate microwindows where interfering line absorption is small so that direct measurements of the N$_2$O$_5$ absorption can be obtained.

Measurements of the broad envelopes of the N$_2$O$_5$ absorption features have been derived following the procedures described in a recent study of stratospheric infrared continuous absorptions using the ATMOS/Spacelab 3 spectra [Rinsland et al., 1988]. Microwindows, ~0.02 cm$^{-1}$ wide, where interfering atmospheric line
absorption is minimal were chosen every ~1 cm⁻¹ across the entire extent of the 
N₂O₅ features based on synthetic spectrum calculations generated using the ATMOS 
line list [Brown et al., 1987] and volume mixing ratio profiles retrieved from 
the ATMOS spectra [e.g. Gunson et al., 1989]. Measurements were included only 
if interfering line absorption was calculated to be less than ~3% in the 
microwindow. This limit restricted the analysis to tangent heights above 23 km 
for the 1246-cm⁻¹ band. Interfering line absorption is much stronger in the 
region of the 743-cm⁻¹ band so that measurements in this region were limited to 
tangent heights above 29 km. The ATMOS spectra were also examined to verify that 
each of the microwindows is free of unidentified lines.

Table 2 presents a listing of the wavenumber limits of each of microwindows 
used in this study. Microwindows designated "x" are in regions containing 
significant N₂O₅ absorption. Microwindows marked "t" are outside of the N₂O₅ 
absorption regions and were used to determine the 100% transmittance levels in 
each spectrum as described below.

The intensities Iᵥ,m measured from an ATMOS spectrum at a microwindow located 
at wavenumber ν were first corrected for interfering line absorption using the 
expression

\[ Iᵥ,c = Iᵥ,m / Tᵥ,i \]  

where \( Tᵥ,i \) is the calculated transmittance due to interfering atmospheric lines, 
\( Iᵥ,c \) is the corrected intensity, and ν is the wavenumber (cm⁻¹). Error bars on 
\( Iᵥ,c \) are 1 to 2% based on the spectral signal-to-noise ratio (~0.5% of \( Iᵥ,m \)), the 
uncertainty in the correction for interfering line absorption (± 20%), and the 
uncertainty in the 0% transmission level in the spectrum (± 0.5% of \( Iᵥ,m \)). The 
intensity levels Iᵥ,t corresponding to the 100% transmittance levels in the
spectra were derived by least-squares fitting the $I_{\nu,c}$ values from the "t" microwindows using the expression

$$I_{\nu,t} = a + b(\nu - \nu_r)$$

where $a$ and $b$ are fitted coefficients determined for each spectrum and $\nu_r$ is an arbitrary reference wavenumber. From Eq. 2 and the fitted coefficients, the transmittance due to $N_2O_5$ absorption $T_{\nu,n}$ was calculated at the wavenumber of each microwindow from

$$T_{\nu,n} = I_{\nu,c}/I_{\nu,t}$$

and the equivalent width $W$ of the $N_2O_5$ feature was computed from

$$W = \int (1 - T_{\nu,n}) \, d\nu$$

with integration limits of 1226 and 1265 cm$^{-1}$ for the $\nu_{12}$ band and 725 and 760 cm$^{-1}$ for the overlapping $\nu_3$ and $\nu_{14}$ bands. The regions used to fit the 100% transmittance level were 1210 to 1226 cm$^{-1}$ and 1265 to 1270 cm$^{-1}$ for the $\nu_{12}$ band and 716 to 725 cm$^{-1}$ and 760 to 770 cm$^{-1}$ for the overlapping $\nu_3$ and $\nu_{14}$ bands.

3.1 $1246$-cm$^{-1}$ ($\nu_{12}$) Feature

Figure 1 shows examples of measurements obtained for the $1246$ cm$^{-1}$ band at sunrise from occultation SR05. The uppermost spectrum (tangent height of 41.9 km corresponding to a tangent pressure of 1.9 mbar) shows no obvious absorption by $N_2O_5$. The measured equivalent width is $0.03 \pm 0.04$ cm$^{-1}$ (1 sigma). The next lower spectrum in the figure (tangent height of 33.8 km corresponding to a tangent pressure of 6.4 mbar) shows detectable absorption by $N_2O_5$ (equivalent width of $0.59 \pm 0.04$ cm$^{-1}$). The absorption is much stronger in the third and fourth spectra (tangent heights of 26.9 and 24.0 km corresponding respectively to tangent pressures of 18.6 and 29.4 mbar). Comparison of the later two curves with the calculated spectrum of $N_2O_5$ obtained from the room temperature cross
sections of Massie et al. [1985] (bottom curve) shows good agreement between the measured and calculated N$_2$O$_5$ band shapes (except for a minor difference discussed below). The contours of the P, Q, and R branches of the N$_2$O$_5$ band are clearly visible in the lower altitude measurements. Note that the total absorption is nearly equal for the 26.9 and 24.0 km scans (equivalent widths of 1.66 ± 0.06 and 1.75 ± 0.06 cm$^{-1}$, respectively), despite a factor of 1.60 between the airmasses of the two scans, indicating that the volume mixing ratio of N$_2$O$_5$ is declining rapidly with decreasing altitude between 26.9 and 24.0 km.

When the measured and calculated curves are overlayed (e.g. Figure 2), the N$_2$O$_5$ feature is slightly narrower in the stratospheric spectra than in the calculated spectra for 296 K. This change is in agreement with changes in band contours measured in the laboratory between room and stratospheric temperatures for several heavy molecules (e.g. ClONO$_2$ [Ballard et al., 1988], CF$_2$Cl$_2$ [Elkins and Sams, 1986; Nguyen-Van-Thanh et al., 1986], and CFC$_2$ [Nanes et al. 1980; Elkins and Sams, 1986]). Cantrell et al. [1988] reported that their laboratory measurements show no significant changes in the integrated absorption and peak height of the 1246-cm$^{-1}$ N$_2$O$_5$ band between 233 and 350 K. Unfortunately, the variation of the shape of the band with temperature was not discussed.

Figure 3 presents a plot of the measured equivalent widths of the N$_2$O$_5$ 1246-cm$^{-1}$ band as a function of tangent height derived from the sunrise occultation SR05 and filter 2 zonal average spectra. Measured equivalent widths more than 3 times the estimated 1-sigma error limit (± 0.04 cm$^{-1}$ above 28 km, ± 0.06 cm$^{-1}$ below 28 km for SR05; ± 0.026 cm$^{-1}$ above 28 km, ± 0.04 cm$^{-1}$ below 28 km for the zonal average spectra) are obtained from five SR05 spectra with tangent heights between 37.6 and 24.0 km and three sunset spectra with tangent heights of 29.6, 26.0, and 23.0 km (tangent pressures of 12.8, 21.8, and 34.6 mbar, respectively).
To illustrate the N$_2$O$_5$ absorption measured in the sunset spectra, the 26.0 km tangent height sunset measurements are plotted in Figure 4 along with the SR05 data for a tangent height of 37.6 km. The sunrise spectrum was included because the strength of the N$_2$O$_5$ absorption is nearly equal to that in the sunset spectrum. Despite the weakness of the absorption (maximum optical depth ~1%), there is good agreement between the measured location and shape of the N$_2$O$_5$ features in the two spectra, adding confidence to the identification of N$_2$O$_5$ absorption in the sunset spectra.

Because of the good quality and wide range of altitudes of the SR05 measurements, it was possible to invert the sunrise profile directly from the measured equivalent widths. For this purpose, we used the onion-peeling retrieval technique and assumed linear absorption by N$_2$O$_5$ and an integrated band intensity of $4.32 \times 10^{-17} \text{ cm}^{-1}/\text{molecule cm}^{-2}$ at all temperatures. The assumption of linear absorption by N$_2$O$_5$ should be accurate to better than 1% since the N$_2$O$_5$ optical depth does not exceed 10% in any of the spectra. The value assumed for the 1246 cm$^{-1}$ band integrated intensity was adopted from the analysis of the ATMOS observations by Toon et al. [1986]. It has been chosen for consistency with the latter study and also because it agrees fairly well with most of the reported measurements (see Table 1 of Cantrell et al. [1988] for a summary of the published laboratory measurements of N$_2$O$_5$ integrated band intensities and peak absorption cross sections). Exceptions are integrated intensities of $2.36 \times 10^{-17} \text{ cm}^{-1}/\text{molecule cm}^{-2}$ at 298 K [Lovejoy et al., 1980] and $5.11 \times 10^{-17} \text{ cm}^{-1}/\text{molecule cm}^{-2}$ at 298 K [Camy-Peyret et al., 1988] (a revision of the results from an earlier study [Camy-Peyret et al., 1987]). Only the data of Cantrell et al. [1988] cover the range of stratospheric temperatures; all other values were derived from spectra of N$_2$O$_5$ samples at room temperature. Based on the
agreement between the reported measurements, an uncertainty of 20% for the 1246 cm\(^{-1}\) integrated band intensity has been adopted in our error budget calculations. This error estimate has been revised downward from the value of 50% reported previously [Russell et al., 1988].

The relatively wide tangent height spacings between successive ATMOS spectra (2.9 to 4.1 km) required that we include a number of additional layers in the model atmosphere between the altitudes defined by the tangent heights of the spectra. Layer thicknesses of ~0.5 km were used. In the analysis of the equivalent width from each scan, the volume mixing ratio (VMR) values in all layers with boundary altitudes between the tangent heights of the scan and the previous scan were scaled by a multiplicative factor to obtain equal measured and calculated equivalent widths. Initially, a constant N\(_2\)O\(_5\) volume mixing ratio in the stratosphere was assumed. However, this distribution is not realistic, and a "saw-tooth" vertical profile was obtained with VMR discontinuities at the altitudes corresponding to the tangent heights of the spectra. These discontinuities were removed by smoothing the vertical profile by fitting the measurements with a cubic function to describe the variation of the VMR with altitude. The analysis and smoothing were repeated several times until a continuous vertical VMR distribution was retrieved at all altitudes. Although the smoothing function is somewhat arbitrary, tests with different, realistic smoothing expressions indicate that this procedure is unlikely to result in errors of more than 5% in the relative vertical distribution.

Because N\(_2\)O\(_5\) absorption is much weaker in the sunset spectra, the vertical profile can only be retrieved below an altitude of ~30 km. To obtain a realistic profile shape above 30 km, we scaled a N\(_2\)O\(_5\) vertical profile calculated for sunset with a diurnal photochemical model by a multiplicative factor until equal
measured and calculated equivalent widths were obtained for the 29.6-km tangent height spectrum. The model calculations (M. Natarajan, private communication, 1989) were computed for the same latitude and date as the ATMOS measurements and assume at each altitude the appropriate ATMOS pressures and temperatures and the measured mixing ratios of O₃, CH₄, and H₂O [Gunson et al., 1989], total odd nitrogen [Russell et al., 1988], and total odd chlorine [Raper et al., 1987]. The retrieval analysis for the lower altitudes followed that described for the sunrise spectra.

In Tables 3 and 4, the retrieved VMR values along with estimated precisions and absolute error limits (1 sigma) are given at altitude spacings of 2 km. Precisions have been estimated from the accuracy of the equivalent width measurements, the uncertainty in the inversion technique, and the precision of the ATMOS tangent pressures and corresponding tangent heights. The absolute errors at each altitude include the estimated uncertainty in the assumed N₂O₅ integrated band intensity and the systematic errors in the tangent pressures and corresponding tangent heights. See Gunson et al. [1989] for a detailed discussion of the ATMOS/SL3 error budget.

3.2 743-cm⁻¹ (ν₃, ν₁₄) Feature

Although the 743-cm⁻¹ band of N₂O₅ is about as strong as the 1246 cm⁻¹ band [Lovejoy et al., 1980; Cantrell et al., 1988], the spectral region containing the 743-cm⁻¹ band is much less favorable for quantitative measurements because of strong interference by atmospheric lines, primarily due to O₃ and CO₂. Nevertheless, at high altitudes (above ~29 km), it is possible to observe the broad absorption envelope of the 743 cm⁻¹ band in spectra from ATMOS occultation SR06, the only sunrise event recorded with filter 1 (600-1200 cm⁻¹).
In Figure 5, spectra recorded at sunrise and sunset near a tangent height of 32 km are plotted on an expanded vertical scale over the region of the 743-cm\(^{-1}\) N\(_2\)O\(_5\) band. A broad absorption envelope covering 725 to 760 cm\(^{-1}\) is superimposed on the line absorption in the sunrise spectrum, but this broad envelope is not apparent in the sunset spectrum. To confirm that the broad feature results from N\(_2\)O\(_5\) absorption, the transmittance due to N\(_2\)O\(_5\) alone was calculated using the cross sections at 273 K reported in Figure 1 of Cantrell et al. [1988]. The transmittance curve obtained for a N\(_2\)O\(_5\) column amount of 2.0 \(\times\) 10\(^{16}\) molecules cm\(^{-2}\) is plotted with the sunrise spectrum and shows that the difference between the sunrise and sunset absorption can be explained by enhanced absorption by N\(_2\)O\(_5\) in the sunrise spectrum. Similar results are obtained from comparisons of sunrise-sunset sets of spectra recorded near 36 and 29 km. At lower altitudes, the sunrise-sunset difference is less apparent because of the intense, overlapping absorption by atmospheric lines.

Although less satisfactory for quantitative analysis, it is nevertheless useful to compare retrievals from the 743-cm\(^{-1}\) feature with those from the 1246-cm\(^{-1}\) feature to test the consistency of the results and to provide further confirmation of the identification of the 743-cm\(^{-1}\) feature. We therefore selected the microwindows listed in Table 2 and obtained the sequence of sunrise measurements shown in Figure 6. The envelope of the N\(_2\)O\(_5\) band is not apparent in the measurements (at top) for a tangent height of 41.4 km (tangent pressure of 2.1 mbar), but can be seen in the measurements (next two lower curves) for tangent heights of 33.3 and 29.8 km (tangent pressures of 6.9 and 11.8 mbar, respectively). The bottom curve shows the calculation of the N\(_2\)O\(_5\) absorption obtained with the Cantrell et al. [1988, Figure 1] cross sections at 273 K and a N\(_2\)O\(_5\) column amount of 4.0 \(\times\) 10\(^{16}\) molecules cm\(^{-2}\).
Because of the strong interference, it was not possible to identify absorption by the 743-cm\(^{-1}\) \(N_2O_5\) feature in the filter 1 sunset spectra. A weak, unidentified absorption feature was observed in the 725- to 735-cm\(^{-1}\) interval of the zonal average sunset spectra with tangent heights of 36.8, 32.7, and 28.9 km (tangent pressures of 4.6, 8.2, and 14.2 mbar, respectively). Although this absorption overlaps the contour of the 743-cm\(^{-1}\) \(N_2O_5\) feature, the unidentified feature is offset to lower wavenumber, and therefore is produced mostly by some other molecule. Measured equivalent widths and estimated 1-sigma error limits (in cm\(^{-1}\)) are 0.08 ± 0.03 at 36.8 km, 0.12 ± 0.05 at 32.7 km, and 0.20 ± 0.08 at 28.9 cm\(^{-1}\). The location of the unassigned absorption occurs in the region containing the strongest R branch lines of the intense 10001-01101 band of \(^{12}\)C\(^{16}\)O\(_2\). It is possible that our corrections underestimate the residual absorption by the wings of these lines. We have assumed that the unassigned absorption is also present in the sunrise data and have corrected the measured \(N_2O_5\) equivalent widths based on the sunset results.

The integrated \(\nu_3/\nu_{14}\) band intensity of \(4.36 \times 10^{-17}\) cm\(^{-1}\)/molecule cm\(^{-2}\) reported by Cantrell et al. [1988] was adopted in the analysis of the equivalent widths derived from the sunrise spectra. Because of the increased uncertainty in the equivalent widths due to interference effects, the shape of the vertical distribution was poorly determined using the onion-peeling retrieval technique. We therefore derived the VMR profile by scaling the vertical distribution retrieved from the filter 2 sunrise measurements (1246-cm\(^{-1}\) band) until the sum of the squares of the measured equivalent widths was minimized. The resulting scaling factor 1.02 ± 0.15 indicates consistency between the results for the two bands, although the error limit is rather large. The scaled profile is included in Table 3, although the estimated precisions are considerably poorer
than derived for the 1246-cm$^{-1}$ band. The absolute accuracies have been derived assuming an uncertainty of 20% for the adopted 743-cm$^{-1}$ integrated band intensity. The SR06 measurements have little impact on the weighted average volume mixing ratios at sunrise reported in Table 3.

4. Discussion

In Figure 7, the present results, previous measurements, and photochemical model calculations are plotted as a function of altitude. The preliminary sunrise profile derived by Toon et al. [1986] was obtained from analysis of the 1246-cm$^{-1}$ band in the ATMOS SR05 spectra using a different approach than adopted in the present study. In the earlier work, the N$_2$O$_5$ profile was obtained by scaling a reference photochemical model profile by a single multiplicative factor until the N$_2$O$_5$ envelopes in synthetic spectra matched those in the measured spectra [Toon et al., 1986; Russell et al., 1988]. Hence, the sunrise vertical distribution was assumed, not retrieved, as in the present investigation (recall that both studies have assumed the same value for the integrated intensity of the 1246-cm$^{-1}$ band). Above 33 km, the two profiles agree within 15%, with the present profile the lower of the two above 34 km. Below 33 km, our revised volume mixing ratios are higher with the maximum difference in percent occurring at 27.5 km where we obtain 1.15 ppbv as compared to 0.77 ppbv previously. The N$_2$O$_5$ predawn profile derived from emission measurements of the 1246 cm$^{-1}$ band [Kunde et al., 1988] is slightly higher than the ATMOS sunrise profile, in general accordance with diurnal changes predicted by photochemical models.

The diurnal photochemical model profiles plotted in Figure 7 (M. Natarajan, private communication, 1989; M. Allen, private communication, 1989) were computed with the chemical kinetic and photochemical data from the recent NASA evaluation
NASA-JPL, 1987]. The model calculations are described elsewhere [Natarajan and Callis, 1989; M. Allen, manuscript in preparation, 1989]. Within the measurement error limits, the sunrise observations and the profiles predicted with the two models agree at all altitudes. The agreement between measurement and calculation is less satisfactory at sunset with both diurnal photochemical models predicting higher VMRs than the ATMOS measurements. Although the measurement error limits are large, there is also an indication that the maximum N$_2$O$_5$ VMR at sunset occurs at a slightly higher altitude in the measurements (≈28 km) than in the calculations (≈26 km). Based on the present measurements and the sum of total odd nitrogen derived from the ATMOS profiles [Russell et al., 1988], the contribution of N$_2$O$_5$ at sunset is negligible, at most only ≈2% of the total with the maximum at 27 km.

In a recent review, Brasseur et al. [1987] emphasized that calculations of the nitrogen oxides in the stratosphere are sensitive to a number of effects. For example, multiple scattering by molecules and aerosols, the aerosol load of the atmosphere, and the albedo are important in determining the N$_2$O$_5$ photodissociation rate, especially at high solar zenith angles. The accuracy in calculating the photodissociation rate is also limited by the uncertainties in the recommended absorption cross sections and their temperature dependences. The combined uncertainty in the cross sections and the quantum yields for N$_2$O$_5$ photodissociation, taking into account the atmospherically important wavelength regions, is rather large, about 2.0 [NASA/JPL, 1987, Table 5]. A combination of these effects is likely to be responsible for the difference between the observations and model results at sunset.
5. Conclusions

In this paper we have reported the analysis of two infrared absorption features of $N_2O_5$ observed in the ATMOS/SL3 spectra of the stratosphere. The primary results are the detection and quantitative measurement of absorption by the 1246-cm$^{-1}$ band at sunset in the lower stratosphere and the retrieval of a precise (±10%) sunrise vertical distribution covering the 25.5- to 37.5-km altitude region. Including systematic error effects, the 1-sigma error bars of the retrieved volume mixing ratios vary from ±21% at 25.5 km to ±26% at 37.5 km for the sunrise measurements and are ±38% for the sunset results at 25.5 km. The uncertainty in the $N_2O_5$ integrated band intensities at stratospheric temperatures (±20% has been assumed for both the 743- and 1246-cm$^{-1}$ features) contributes significantly to the absolute uncertainties. Within the error limits, the retrieved $N_2O_5$ sunrise volume mixing ratios agree at all altitudes with profiles calculated with two different diurnal photochemical models, but the measured sunset values are about a factor of two lower than values calculated with the same models. Also, in this work, the detections of the 1246- and 1720-cm$^{-1}$ $N_2O_5$ features [Toon et al., 1986; Toon, 1987] have been extended by the identification of the 743-cm$^{-1}$ $N_2O_5$ feature (overlapping $\nu_3$ and $\nu_{14}$ bands) in the ATMOS filter 1 sunrise spectra. Strong spectral interference in the region of the 743-cm$^{-1}$ feature limits the accuracy of the measurements and the altitude coverage to tangent heights above ~29 km. Within the error limits, the sunrise profiles deduced from the 743- and 1246-cm$^{-1}$ features are consistent. The 743-cm$^{-1}$ band was not detected in the spectra recorded at sunset due to the strong interference in the lower stratospheric scans.

Flights of the ATMOS instrument over the upcoming decade will cover a wide variety of geographic locations during different seasons, including the high
latitude sunlit boundary of the polar night where high concentrations of N$_2$O$_5$ are expected. The resulting simultaneous measurements of N$_2$O$_5$ and the other main constituents of the [NO$_y$] chemical family along with measurements of other key stratospheric species will provide important observational data for additional testing of photochemical model predictions.

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References


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SS indicates sunset; SR, sunrise. Spectral coverage with filter 1, 600-1200 cm\(^{-1}\), filter 2, 1100-2000 cm\(^{-1}\) (field of view 2 mrad with both filters corresponding to 4 km altitude at the horizon).
### TABLE 2. Microwindow Regions (cm⁻¹) used in the Analysis

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**Notes:**
- **t**-microwindow used to define the 100% transmittance level.
- **x**-microwindow in the region used to measure the total absorption by N₂O₅.
TABLE 3. \textit{N}_2\textit{O}_5 Volume Mixing Ratio (VMR) Profiles in the Southern (Sunrise) Hemisphere Obtained May, 1985, by the ATMOS Experiment on Spacelab 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HT (km)</th>
<th>PRES (mbar)</th>
<th>TEMP (K)</th>
<th>VMR (ppbv)</th>
<th>Error(%)</th>
<th>VMR (ppbv)</th>
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</table>

HT indicates altitude; PRES, pressure; TEMP, temperature; P, precision; and A, accuracy.
TABLE 4. N$_2$O$_5$ Volume Mixing Ratio (VMR) Profile in the Northern (Sunset) Hemisphere Obtained May, 1985, by the ATMOS Experiment on Spacelab 3

<table>
<thead>
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<th>HT (km)</th>
<th>PRES (mbar)</th>
<th>TEMP (K)</th>
<th>VMR (ppbv)</th>
<th>Error(%)</th>
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<td>32 38</td>
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HT indicates altitude; PRES, pressure; TEMP, temperature; P, precision; and A, absolute accuracy.
**Figure Captions**

Figure 1. Examples of microwindow measurements in the region of the N$_2$O$_5$ 1246-cm$^{-1} \nu_{12}$ band obtained from ATMOS occultation SR05 and a simulation of N$_2$O$_5$ absorption with the cross sections of Massie et al. [1985]. The measurements (upper four curves) and calculated values are shown on the same scale, but have been offset vertically for clarity. The tangent heights and corresponding tangent pressures of the measured curves (top to bottom) are 41.9 km and 1.9 mbar, 33.8 km and 6.4 mbar, 26.9 km and 18.6 mbar, and 24.0 km and 29.4 mbar. Dashed lines show the fitted 100% transmittance levels derived for the 33.8- and 26.9-km scans (see text for details). Note that microwindow measurements from SR05 spectra with tangent heights (tangent pressures) of 37.6 km (3.6 mbar) and 30.1 km (11.3 mbar) are not plotted. The calculated spectrum was computed with the room temperature N$_2$O$_5$ cross sections of Massie et al. [1985] and a N$_2$O$_5$ column amount of $6.0 \times 10^{16}$ molecules cm$^{-2}$.

Figure 2. Comparison of measured microwindow transmittances and calculated transmittances in the region of the the 1246-cm$^{-1}$ band of N$_2$O$_5$. The measured transmittances have been derived from an ATMOS SR05 spectrum with a tangent height of 26.9 km (tangent pressure 18.6 mbar). The calculated transmittances have been computed with the room temperature N$_2$O$_5$ cross sections of Massie et al. [1985] and a N$_2$O$_5$ column of $4.5 \times 10^{16}$ molecules cm$^{-2}$. The spectral limits of the cross section data are 1225 to 1265 cm$^{-1}$.

Figure 3. Measured equivalent widths of the 1246-cm$^{-1} \nu_{12}$ N$_2$O$_5$ band as a function of tangent height derived from ATMOS sunrise occultation SR05 and the filter 2
zonal spectra. Error bars indicate the estimated two sigma error limits of the equivalent widths.

Figure 4. Comparison of microwindow measurements in the region of the \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) 1246-cm\(^{-1}\) band obtained from a filter 2 zonal average spectrum (upper curve) recorded at a tangent height of 26.0 km (tangent pressure 21.8 mbar) and a SR05 spectrum (lower curve) recorded at a tangent height of 37.6 km (tangent pressure 3.6 mbar). The data from the two spectra are shown on the same scale, but have been offset vertically for clarity. Dashed lines show the fitted 100% transmittance levels derived for the scans (see text for details).

Figure 5. Sunrise (SR06) and filter 1 zonal average sunset spectra in the region of the 743-cm\(^{-1}\) band of \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \). The spectra are normalized to the highest measured intensity in the plotted region, and are shown on an expanded vertical scale. The curve above the sunrise spectrum shows transmittances calculated with the \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) cross sections obtained at 273 K by Cantrell et al. [1988, Figure 1] and a \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) column amount of \( 2.0 \times 10^{15} \) molecules cm\(^{-2}\).

Figure 6. Examples of microwindow measurements in the region of the \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) 743-cm\(^{-1}\) feature (\( \nu_3 \) and \( \nu_1 \), bands) obtained from occultation SR06 spectra (upper three plots) and a simulation of \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \) absorption with the cross sections of Cantrell et al. [1988, Figure 1] (bottom plot). The measured and calculated curves are shown on the same scale, but have been offset vertically for clarity. The tangent heights and corresponding tangent pressures of the measured curves (top to bottom) are 41.4 km and 2.1 mbar, 33.3 km and 6.9 mbar, and 29.8 km and 11.8 mbar. Dashed lines show the fitted 100% transmittance levels derived for
the 33.3- and 29.8-km scans (see text for details). The calculated spectrum was computed with a N$_2$O$_5$ column amount of $4.0 \times 10^{16}$ molecules cm$^{-2}$.

Figure 7. Comparison of N$_2$O$_5$ VMR profiles retrieved from the ATMOS/SL3 observations with predawn measurements obtained by the SIRIS instrument [Kunde et al., 1988] and diurnal photochemical model predictions for the ATMOS measurement conditions. The ATMOS error bars (1 sigma) are shown at several altitudes. Models 1 and 2 denote the model calculations of M. Natarajan (private communication, 1989) and M. Allen (private communication, 1989), respectively.
Figure 1

Top to Bottom: #1-4 ATMOS SR05, #5 Calculated \( \text{N}_2\text{O}_5 \)

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Wavenumber (cm\(^{-1}\))

100% Transmission

--- 33.8 km

--- 26.9 km
Equivalent Width (cm$^{-1}$)

Tangent Height (km)

- SR05 (47.0°S)
- Zonal Filter #2 (29.5°N)

Figure 3
Figure 4

**N$_2$O$_5$ Microwindow Measurements—ATMOS SL3**

- ○ Zonal 26.0 km T.H.
- Fitted Background
- ● SR05 37.6 km T.H.

Intensity

Wavenumber (cm$^{-1}$)
ATMOS/SL5 - Sunrise 46.9°S lat., Tang. Ht. 33.3 km

ATMOS/SL3 - Sunset 31.0°N lat., Tang. Ht. 32.7 km
Figure 6

Top to Bottom: #1-3 ATMOS SR06, #4 N$_2$O$_5$ Simulation

Tangent Height
41.4
33.3
29.8

Intensity

100% Transmission

--- 32.9 km

---- 29.3 km

Wavenumber (cm$^{-1}$)

715 720 725 730 735 740 745 750 755 760 765 770
Figure 7

**ATMOS SUNRISE (47°S)**
May 1, 1985
- This study
- Toon et al. (SR05)

Diurnal Model Calculations
- - Model 1  - - - - - - Model 2

**SIRIS PREDAWN (32°N)**
Sept. 16, 1986
- Kunde et al.

---

**Sunset, May 1, 1985 (30°N)**

Diurnal Model Calculations
- - Model 1  - - - - - - Model 2
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The unequivocal detection of $\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$ in the stratosphere was reported by Toon et al. (1986, 1987) based on measurements of the absorption by the $\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$ bands at 1246 and 1720 cm$^{-1}$ in solar occultation spectra recorded at sunrise near 47°S latitude by the Atmospheric Trace Molecule Spectroscopy (ATMOS) experiment during the Spacelab 3 (SL3) shuttle mission (April 29 - May 6, 1985). In this work, we report additional measurements and analysis of stratospheric $\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$, derived from the ATMOS/SL3 spectra. The primary results are the detection and measurement of $\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$ absorption at sunset in the lower stratosphere, the inversion of a precise (10%) $\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$ sunrise vertical distribution between 25.5- and 37.5-km altitude, and the identification and measurement of absorption by the $\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$ 743-cm$^{-1}$ band at sunrise. Assuming $4.32 \times 10^{-7}$ and $4.36 \times 10^{-7}$ cm$^{-1}$/molecule cm$^{-2}$ respectively for the integrated intensities of the 1246 and 743 cm$^{-1}$ bands at stratospheric temperatures, retrieved volume mixing ratios in parts per billion by volume (ppbv) at sunrise (47°S latitude) are $1.32 \pm 0.34$ at 37.5 km, $1.53 \pm 0.35$ at 35.5 km, $1.63 \pm 0.36$ at 33.5 km, $1.60 \pm 0.34$ at 31.5 km, $1.43 \pm 0.30$ at 29.5 km, $1.15 \pm 0.24$ at 27.5 km, and $0.73 \pm 0.15$ at 25.5 km. Retrieved VMRs in ppbv at sunset (30°N latitude) are $0.13 \pm 0.05$ at 29.5 km, $0.14 \pm 0.05$ at 27.5 km, $0.10 \pm 0.04$ at 25.5 km. Quoted error limits (1 sigma) include the error in the assumed band intensities (20%). Within the error limits of the measurements, the inferred mixing ratios at sunrise agree with diurnal photochemical model predictions obtained by two groups using current photochemical data. The measured mixing ratios at sunset are lower than the model predictions with differences of about a factor of 2 at 25-km altitude.