Nitric Acid Uptake on Subtropical Cirrus Cloud Particles

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Abstract

The redistribution of HNO$_3$ via uptake and sedimentation by cirrus cloud particles is considered an important term in the upper tropospheric budget of reactive nitrogen. Numerous cirrus cloud encounters by the NASA WB-57F high-altitude research aircraft during CRYSTAL-FACE were accompanied by the observation of condensed-phase HNO$_3$ with the NOAA chemical ionization mass spectrometer. The instrument measures HNO$_3$ with two independent channels of detection connected to separate forward- and downward-facing inlets that allow a determination of the amount of HNO$_3$ condensed on ice particles. Subtropical cirrus clouds, as indicated by the presence of ice particles, were observed coincident with condensed-phase HNO$_3$ at temperatures of 197 K - 224 K and pressures of 122 hPa - 224 hPa. Maximum levels of condensed-phase HNO$_3$ approached the gas-phase equivalent of 0.8 ppbv. Ice particle surface coverages as high as $1.4 \times 10^{14}$ molecules·cm$^{-2}$ were observed. A dissociative Langmuir adsorption model, when using an empirically derived HNO$_3$ adsorption enthalpy of $-11.0$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$, effectively describes the observed molecular coverages to within a factor of 5. The percentage of total HNO$_3$ in the condensed phase ranged from near zero to 100% in the observed cirrus clouds. With volume-weighted mean particle diameters up to 700 μm and particle fall velocities up to 10 m·s$^{-1}$, some observed clouds have significant potential to redistribute HNO$_3$ in the upper troposphere.
1. Introduction

Cirrus clouds are ubiquitous throughout the upper troposphere (UT) and can cover as much as 40% of the Earth’s surface [Liao et al., 1995, Jin et al., 1996, Wang et al., 1996, Wylie and Menzel, 1999]. Composed of ice crystals [Lynch, 2002], cirrus clouds are known to play a complex and significant role in the global radiation budget [Liou, 1986].

Cirrus clouds can be formed in situ in the UT [Kärcher, 2002], as a result of synoptic weather disturbances, or in the anvil outflow at the top of cumulonimbus clouds [Sassen, 2002]. Tropical cirrus clouds around the peak convective detrainment level are formed primarily via the latter mechanism, and can reach altitudes of up to 18 km when produced in deep convective systems. The broad lateral and vertical extent of anvil cirrus clouds produced in the tropics is expected to exert a greater influence on the Earth’s climate system than midlatitude cirrus [Heymsfield and McFarquhar, 2002]. Due to the high altitudes and often-remote locations of tropical cirrus, however, comprehensive in situ measurements of these clouds have been limited.

Model simulations by Lawrence and Crutzen [1998] suggest that the uptake and gravitational redistribution of nitric acid (HNO₃) by cirrus cloud particles may represent a significant sink of HNO₃ in the UT. Nitric acid serves as a primary reservoir species for nitrogen oxides (NOₓ) [Neuman et al., 2001], which are directly involved in the photochemical production of tropospheric ozone [Jaegle et al., 1998]. Model studies of cirrus-processed air have demonstrated that the sedimentary removal of HNO₃ from the UT can effect strong local reductions in NOₓ, with the consequence of significant reductions in the net ozone production rate [Meier and Hendricks, 2002]. Since ozone is known to be an effective greenhouse gas in the troposphere [Albritton et al., 2001], particularly near the tropopause [Lacis et al., 1990], understanding the uptake and redistribution of HNO₃ by cirrus cloud particles may be important in assessing the contribution of cirrus clouds to the radiative forcing of climate change.

A number of laboratory studies have investigated the uptake of HNO₃ on ice surfaces
at temperatures typical of the UT. Experiments performed by Zondlo et al. [1997] on vapor-deposited ice films at 211 K resulted in observed HNO₃ surface coverages of 1.5·10¹⁵ molecules·cm⁻². A series of similar experiments reported by Hudson et al. [2002] at an HNO₃ pressure (P(HNO₃)) of 1.1·10⁻⁶ hPa indicated a negative temperature dependence to the observed uptake, with coverages of 1.1·10¹⁴ to 5.9·10¹³ molecules·cm⁻² over a temperature range of 214-220 K. Uptake studies performed on ice films by Abbatt [1997] yielded coverages of up to 2.9·10¹⁴ molecules·cm⁻² at temperatures as low as 208 K, with no apparent dependency on P(HNO₃) values over the range 1.7·10⁻⁷ to 4.1·10⁻⁶ hPa. Hynes et al. [2002] reported comparable coverages using a similar technique, although they observed coverages increasing by factor of 2 over a nearly 10-fold increase in P(HNO₃), from 5.0·10⁻⁷ - 3.0·10⁻⁶ hPa. A laboratory study of HNO₃ uptake on nebulized half-micron diameter ice particles at 230 K yielded coverages similar to those observed on the ice films (1.2·10¹⁴ molecules·cm⁻²), although these experiments were performed at the relatively high P(HNO₃) of 7·10⁻⁶ hPa [Arora et al., 1999]. There has not yet been an extensive laboratory study of HNO₃ uptake on ice surfaces performed at P(HNO₃) values typical of the UT (< 2.0·10⁻⁷ hPa).

Prior field studies of HNO₃ uptake on cirrus cloud particles have been made at mid and high latitudes. Measurements of total reactive nitrogen (NOₓ = NO + NO₂ + 2N₂O₅ + HNO₃ + ...) in a mountain wave cloud over the continental United States reported by Weinheimer et al. [1998] indicated that levels of condensed NOₓ in the cloud approached 20% of total NOₓ. Surface coverages on the wave cloud ice particles were calculated to be as high as 2.5·10¹³ molecules·cm⁻² [Hudson et al., 2002]. Measurements of condensed-phase NOₓ in cirrus layers in the Arctic UT by Kondo et al. [2003] yielded HNO₃ coverages as high as 1.6·10¹⁴ molecules·cm⁻² at temperatures of approximately 200 K, with coverages decreasing at warmer temperatures. Meilinger et al. [1999] conducted similar measurements in Arctic cirrus clouds at 196 K and reported coverages of only 1·10¹³ molecules·cm⁻². An extensive dataset of measurements made at
midlatitudes revealed median levels of condensed NO\textsubscript{y} (assumed to be HNO\textsubscript{3}) in the
northern hemisphere of 3.6 \times 10\textsuperscript{12} molecules-cm\textsuperscript{-2} to be greater than twice that observed in
the southern hemisphere [Ziereis et al., 2003]

We report here an extensive dataset of in situ measurements, including gas- and
condensed-phase HNO\textsubscript{3} and ice particle surface area density (SAD), obtained in
subtropical in situ and anvil cirrus clouds. These measurements were conducted onboard
the NASA WB-57F high-altitude research aircraft as part of the Cirrus Regional Study of
Tropical Anvils and Cirrus Layers Florida Area Cirrus Experiment (CRYSTAL-FACE)
mission. The data are used here to assess the uptake of HNO\textsubscript{3} by subtropical cirrus cloud
particles and explore the partitioning of HNO\textsubscript{3} between the gas and ice particle phases in
cirrus clouds.

2. Instrumentation

This study utilizes data from a number of in situ instruments onboard the NASA WB-
57F aircraft. Gas-phase and condensed-phase HNO\textsubscript{3} measurements made by chemical
ionization mass spectrometry are described in more detail below. Particle size
distribution and number density measurements made by the Cloud, Aerosol and
Precipitation Spectrometer (CAPS) were used to derive SAD and volume-weighted mean
diameter (VMD) for ice particles in the size range between 0.35-1550 \textmu m [Baumgardner
et al., 2001]. Note that all particle sizes cited herein refer to particle diameter, and not
radius. A second, independent measurement of SAD was provided by the Cloud
Integrating Nephelometer (CIN) [Gerber et al., 2000]. Ice water content (IWC) and
water (H\textsubscript{2}O) vapor were measured by the Harvard University Lyman-\alpha hygrometer
[Weinstock et al., 1994, Weinstock et al., 2003]. Nitric oxide (NO) and total reactive
nitrogen (NO\textsubscript{y}) were measured by catalytic reduction and chemiluminescence
[Weinheimer et al., 2003]. Ambient temperature and pressure, and WB-57F true air
speed were measured by the Meteorological Measurement System (MMS) [Scott et al.,
1990]. The precision and accuracy of these measurements are summarized in Table 1.
Tropopause height was measured by the microwave temperature profiler (MTP) [Denning et al., 1989].

2.1. HNO₃ Measurements

HNO₃ was measured using the NOAA chemical ionization mass spectrometer (CIMS) located in the third pallet position of the NASA WB-57F aircraft. This instrument measures HNO₃ with an accuracy of ±20% and precision of 30 pptv (1σ, 10-s averages), and has been described in detail elsewhere [Neuman et al., 2000]. Prior to CRYSTAL-FACE, the NOAA CIMS was modified by the addition of a second independent channel for the measurement of HNO₃ and the relocation of the original sample inlet on the CIMS inlet pylon (Fig. 1). The two CIMS channels are designed to provide identical measurements of gas-phase HNO₃. Due to differences in the particle sampling efficiencies of the two inlets, however, the two channels have different sensitivity to condensed-phase HNO₃. When sampling in cirrus clouds, the forward-facing front inlet samples both gas-phase HNO₃ and any HNO₃ condensed on the cirrus particles. The downward-facing bottom inlet samples primarily gas-phase HNO₃ because the plane of the sampling orifice is parallel to the direction of flow over the inlet, which is set by the flow straightener. Semi-empirical calculations indicate that approximately 50% of 0.1 μm particles and greater than 90% of 1 μm and larger particles are inertially stripped from the air sampled by the bottom inlet [Vincent et al., 1986]. Calculations further suggest that ice particles greater than 10 μm in diameter (typical of cirrus clouds observed during CRYSTAL-FACE) are almost entirely removed from the sampled air.

Thus, for most of the cirrus clouds sampled, the HNO₃ from the bottom inlet is taken to be a measure of the gas-phase HNO₃ abundance.

The conclusion that ice particles greater than approximately 1 μm are inertially separated from air sampled by the bottom inlet is further supported by measurements made in the contrail of the WB-57F during CRYSTAL-FACE. The contrail contained ice particles with high number densities (100-200 cm⁻³) and volume-weighted mean
diameters on the order of 2 μm [Gao et al., 2003]. HNO₃ was present in the contrail because of mixing between the exhaust gases and ambient air containing approximately 0.4 ppbv HNO₃. Measurements in the contrail as soon as 4 minutes after formation indicated a difference between the front and bottom CIMS channels. The minimum signal from the bottom channel was near zero inside the contrail. This low HNO₃ signal is consistent with the removal of gas-phase HNO₃ by uptake onto the 2-μm ice particles in the contrail, and the inertial stripping of these particles from the bottom inlet sample flow. As expected, a simultaneous increase in HNO₃ above ambient values occurred in the front CIMS channel, which does not discriminate against 2 μm particles. If the bottom CIMS inlet sampled 2 μm particles with any significant efficiency, HNO₃ observed in the bottom channel during the contrail intercept would not be significantly lower than the ambient values immediately outside the contrail.

The front CIMS inlet samples subsisokinetically, meaning the sample air velocity inside the inlet (U) is less than the WB-57F true air speed (U₀) of 140-200 m·s⁻¹ at sampling altitudes. As a result, cirrus cloud particle number densities in the sampled air stream are inertially enhanced relative to those in the ambient air. A computational fluid dynamics program (Fluent Inc., New Hampshire) was used to estimate particle enhancement factors (EF) in the front inlet by simulating the flow field and particle trajectories around a two-dimensional horizontal cross section of the CIMS pylon and inlet structure (Fig. 1). The value of EF is near unity for small particles (<0.1 μm) and increases with particle size, as found for similar configurations [Northway et al., 2002]. For particles larger than approximately 10 μm in diameter, typical of cirrus cloud ice particles sampled during CRYSTAL-FACE, EF for the front inlet approaches the maximum value of U₀/U. Since both CIMS channels sample at a constant mass flow of 1.85 standard liters per minute (slpm), U, and therefore, EF, are dependent upon the ambient temperature and pressure. Under typical WB-57F sampling conditions during CRYSTAL-FACE (temperature = 213 K, pressure = 170 hPa, U₀ = 200 m·s⁻¹), EF has a
maximum value of approximately 16.

Cirrus cloud particles entering the front CIMS inlet travel through a 20 cm length of Teflon™ tubing (6.4 mm outside diameter, 4.0 mm inside diameter) upstream of the CIMS flow control valve and flow tube (Fig. 1). The use of Teflon™ sample lines ensures that HNO₃ will not readily absorb on the inlet surfaces [Neuman et al., 1999]. This tubing, which is heated to 48° C in flight, has two bends to help ensure that large particles entering the inlet will impact on the tubing walls and subsequently evaporate prior to reaching the flow control valve. Particles with diameters greater than approximately 20 µm have large enough stopping distances at the freestream velocity that they impact at the first bend. Some particles that do not fully evaporate will impact in the body of the flow control valve or the flow tube entrance. HNO₃ condensed on the particle surfaces is liberated to the gas phase early in the evaporation process and measured as a gas-phase equivalent volume mixing ratio. The HNO₃ mixing ratio measured by the front CIMS channel, therefore, represents the sum of the gas- and the condensed-phase values, with the condensed-phase component enhanced by the value of EF.

3. Observations

Condensed-phase HNO₃ was observed coincident with cirrus cloud observations on 4 WB-57F science flights conducted as part of CRYSTAL-FACE. These flights originated and terminated at the United States Naval Air Facility, Key West (24.6° N, 81.7° W) in Florida on July 11, 13, 19 and 21, 2002. Time series data of HNO₃ mixing ratios observed from the front and bottom CIMS channels (HNO₃|front and HNO₃|gas, respectively), as well as particle SAD, IWC (represented as a gas-phase equivalent volume mixing ratio) and meteorological parameters are shown for July 11, 13, 19 and 21 in Figs. 2-5, respectively. The presence of cirrus cloud particles is indicated by increases in SAD and IWC above background values. The presence of condensed-phase HNO₃ in a flight segment is indicated by HNO₃|front values that are significantly greater than
HNO₃_gas values. Flight segments identified by purple bars in panel (b) for July 13 (Fig. 3) and July 19 (Fig. 4) represent the observation of contrail cirrus clouds. As stated previously, these clouds are characterized by having high particle number densities with volume-weighted mean diameters typically much lower than cirrus clouds formed by natural processes. Due to the uncertainties in the SAD measurements in the contrail-formed cirrus clouds and in the value of EF for particles in this size range, these clouds are not considered in the data analysis presented here.

Cirrus clouds were observed from the WB-57F at pressures between 122 hPa and 224 hPa during the flights of July 11, 13, 19 and 21, corresponding to pressure altitudes between 11 km and 15 km (Figs. 2-5). These clouds were observed at temperatures between 197 K and 224 K. Figures 2-5 show the strong temporal correlation of (HNO₃¶_front - HNO₃¶_gas) with both SAD and IWC in cirrus clouds, with HNO₃¶_gas approaching zero during a number of cirrus events. Outside of clouds, measured values of HNO₃¶_front and HNO₃¶_gas generally agree well (with an overall correlation coefficient, r, of 0.92). However, some periods in Figs. 2-5 show offsets between the two channels that are best explained as changes in the inlet line surfaces during the flight. Figure 4 also indicates elevated values of relative humidity (with respect to ice) during a number of cirrus cloud encounters, as described by Gao et al. [2003].

Condensed-phase HNO₃, proportional to the difference between the values of HNO₃¶_front and HNO₃¶_gas, was observed primarily at SADs greater than 200 μm²-cm⁻³ during CRYSTAL-FACE (Fig. 6). Note that for the values of (HNO₃¶_front -HNO₃¶_gas) shown in Fig. 6, HNO₃¶_front is not corrected for particle oversampling. Values of (HNO₃¶_front -HNO₃¶_gas) at SADs less than 200 μm²-cm⁻³ are near the detection limit and highly variable due to CIMS instrument noise. In the analyses presented here, observations at SADs greater than 200 μm²-cm⁻³ are selected to represent measurements made in cirrus clouds (shown by the dashed line in Fig. 6).

3.1. Quantifying Condensed-Phase HNO₃
As stated previously, HNO$_3$|$_{\text{front}}$ represents the sum of gas-phase and condensed-phase HNO$_3$, with the condensed-phase component enhanced by the value of $EF$. The amount of HNO$_3$ condensed on cirrus cloud particles (HNO$_3$|$_{\text{con}}$) can therefore be calculated according to equation (1),

$$HNO_3|_{\text{con}} = \frac{HNO_3|_{\text{front}} - HNO_3|_{\text{gas}}}{EF}$$  

where HNO$_3$|$_{\text{con}}$ is reported as a gas-phase equivalent volume mixing ratio with a precision of 3 pptv (1σ, 10-s averages). The use of equation (1) in calculating HNO$_3$|$_{\text{con}}$ is illustrated in Fig. 7 for a cirrus cloud encounter by the WB-57F on July 13, 2002. Increases in SAD and IWC during this cloud event are accompanied by an increase in HNO$_3$|$_{\text{front}}$ above the gas-phase value of approximately 0.5 ppbv (Fig. 7a,d,e).

Accounting for the particle enhancement factor of approximately 13.7 using equation (1), maximum values of HNO$_3$|$_{\text{con}}$ during this cloud event approached 0.1 ppbv (Fig. 7b,c). It should be noted here that calculated values of HNO$_3$|$_{\text{con}}$ in cirrus clouds are not always consistent with the observed decreases in HNO$_3$|$_{\text{gas}}$ that result from HNO$_3$ uptake. Quantitative agreement between HNO$_3$|$_{\text{con}}$ and deficits in HNO$_3$|$_{\text{gas}}$ can only occur if the cloud particles are sampled in the same air mass in which uptake occurred. Due to gravitational settling, however, cirrus particles may sediment into air masses that may be more or less depleted in gas-phase HNO$_3$ at the time of sampling.

3.2. Cirrus Cloud Particle Measurements

Cirrus cloud particle SAD was derived from measurements provided by both the CAPS and CIN instruments onboard the WB-57F during CRYSTAL-FACE. SAD was derived from the CAPS data by integrating particle size distribution and number density measurements, while bulk measurements of cloud extinction coefficient at 635 nm were used to derive SAD from the CIN data. A comparison between the CIN- and CAPS-derived SADs indicates good agreement between the two instruments for the flights on
July 11, 19 and 21, with SADs derived from the CIN measurements ranging from 23-39% higher than the CAPS-derived values on those 3 flight days (Fig. 8). On July 13, the CIN measurements were 54% higher than the CAPS values, which may be attributable to the sampling of optically thin subvisual cirrus clouds near the tropopause on that day. Cloud extinction in these subvisual cirrus is close to the sensitivity threshold of the CIN. The observed differences are nonetheless within the combined uncertainties of the two instruments on all 4 flight days. The analyses presented here make use of SADs derived from the CAPS measurements. Due to the fact that the SADs derived from the CIN measurements are 23-54% higher than the CAPS values, the SADs utilized here can be considered lower limits.

As stated previously, the value of $EF$ used in calculating HNO$_3$$_{con}$ approaches a maximum value of $U_0/U$ (the ratio of the WB-57F true air speed to the air velocity in the sample inlet) at particle sizes greater than approximately 10 $\mu$m. SADs calculated from the CAPS measurements on the 4 flight days considered here (in cirrus clouds with total SADs greater than 200 $\mu$m$^2$-cm$^{-3}$) indicate that 92±9% of the surface area resides on particles larger than 10 $\mu$m in diameter. Use of the maximum value of $EF$ in calculating HNO$_3$$_{con}$ via equation (1), therefore, is expected to introduce no more than 10% uncertainty into the value of HNO$_3$$_{con}$.

The VMD of cirrus cloud particles observed during CRYSTAL-FACE ranged from approximately 3 $\mu$m up to 700 $\mu$m, with most clouds having VMDs greater than 20 $\mu$m (Fig. 9a). The largest particles (> 500 $\mu$m) were observed primarily in clouds with SADs greater than $10^4$ $\mu$m$^2$-cm$^{-3}$. As expected, IWC shows a strong correlation with SAD (Fig. 9b). IWCs as high as 1000 ppmv were observed during some cloud events (Fig. 9b). The highest values of VMD and IWC were observed from the WB-57F primarily at temperatures between 205 K and 215 K during the flights shown in Fig. 9.

4. Discussion

4.1. HNO$_3$ Uptake on Cirrus Cloud Particles
The coincident observation of cirrus clouds and condensed-phase HNO₃ during CRYSTAL-FACE is assumed here to result from the uptake of HNO₃ on the surface of cirrus cloud particles. Laboratory studies indicate that the low solubility of HNO₃ in ice will not allow a significant fraction of HNO₃_{con} to reside in the bulk of the cirrus particles [Sommerfeld et al, 1998, Hanson and Ravishankara, 1991]. Furthermore, Dominé and Thibert [1996] have suggested that the high diffusivity of HNO₃ in ice is such that HNO₃ trapped in the bulk ice during particle formation will migrate to the particle surface. We note, however, that the measurements presented here cannot distinguish between surface uptake and HNO₃ that may be condensed in the bulk of the particles. HNO₃ uptake on cirrus cloud particles can be represented in terms of molecular coverage, given by the ratio of HNO₃_{con} to SAD in units of molecules·cm⁻².

HNO₃ surface coverages observed during CRYSTAL-FACE are shown as a function of temperature in Fig. 10, with symbols colored according to \( P(\text{HNO}_3) \) (see legend). Data shown by triangles at temperatures less than 200 K in Fig.10 represent observations under conditions in which nitric acid trihydrate (NAT) is stable, as predicted by ambient temperature and the ratio of HNO₃_{gas} to H₂O vapor [Hanson and Mauersberger, 1988, Gao et al., 2003]. It has been proposed that, under conditions in which NAT is stable, HNO₃ forms NAT clusters or layers on the particle surface which interfere with the condensation of H₂O molecules on the particle surface, and thereby increase the relative humidity with respect to ice in the cirrus cloud [Gao et al., 2003].

The mean HNO₃ coverage observed during CRYSTAL-FACE was \( 1.9 \times 10^{13} \) molecules·cm⁻², with maximum coverages reaching \( 1.4 \times 10^{14} \) molecules·cm⁻² during a few cirrus cloud events (Fig. 10). While the greatest coverages were observed at temperatures between 205 K and 210 K, mean coverages binned according to temperature show no temperature dependence above 200 K (black symbols in Fig. 10).

The average value for measurements between 195 K and 200 K is approximately a factor of 3 greater than values above 200 K. Generally higher HNO₃ coverages at lower
temperatures have been observed in field measurements reported by both Kondo et al. [2003] and Ziereis et al. [2003]. HNO₃ coverages show a minimal dependence on $P(\text{HNO}_3)$, with the lowest coverages occurring at $P(\text{HNO}_3)$ values below $2.5 \times 10^{-8}$ hPa (Fig. 10). A number of laboratory studies have also reported increased HNO₃ coverages with increasing $P(\text{HNO}_3)$, albeit at $P(\text{HNO}_3)$ values substantially higher than those presented here ($5.0 \times 10^{-7} - 3.0 \times 10^{-6}$ hPa) [Hudson et al., 2002, Hynes et al., 2002]. These results highlight the need for a comprehensive laboratory study of HNO₃ uptake on ice surfaces at $P(\text{HNO}_3)$ values below $2.0 \times 10^{-7}$ hPa that are typical of the subtropical UT.

The coverage of HNO₃ on ice, in general, can be modeled or predicted using the kinetics or thermodynamics of the uptake process [Gao et al., 2003, Hudson et al., 2002]. Using laboratory measurements and a semi-empirical equilibrium surface coverage model, Hudson et al. [2002] have predicted HNO₃ coverage on ice surfaces as a function of temperature and $P(\text{HNO}_3)$. This multilayer Frenkel-Halsey-Hill (FHH) model was fitted to equilibrium HNO₃ coverages observed on vapor-deposited ice films at temperatures between 213 K and 219 K with a $P(\text{HNO}_3)$ of $1.1 \times 10^{-6}$ hPa. HNO₃ surface coverages predicted by the FHH model are shown as a function of temperature in Fig. 11a, together with the HNO₃ coverages observed in cirrus clouds during CRYSTAL-FACE. The isobaric lines representing the modeled coverages are colored on the same scale as the observed coverages according to the values of $P(\text{HNO}_3)$ input to the model. Fig 11a indicates better agreement between the modeled and observed HNO₃ coverages at temperatures higher than approximately 205 K, while at lower temperatures the modeled coverages increase to values far greater than those observed at comparable temperatures and $P(\text{HNO}_3)$ values. The high model coverages below 205 K may result from the fact that the model was fitted to laboratory data at temperatures above 213 K, and the coverages presented here, therefore, are extrapolated to lower temperatures where the uncertainty in the model increases.

A number of studies have described the uptake of HNO₃ on ice surfaces using a
Langmuir surface chemistry model [Tabazdeh et al., 1999, Hynes et al., 2002, Meier et al., 2002]. The Langmuir isotherm predicts the fractional HNO₃ surface coverage ($\theta$) according to equation 2,

$$\theta = \frac{K_{eq}^{1/2} \cdot P(\text{HNO}_3)^{1/2}}{1 + K_{eq}^{1/2} \cdot P(\text{HNO}_3)^{1/2}}$$ (2)

where $K_{eq}$ represents the equilibrium adsorption constant, given by the ratio of the rates of adsorption and desorption ($k_a/k_d$) [Laidler and Meiser, 1982]. The value of $\theta$ is unity when the HNO₃ surface coverage reaches a complete monolayer ($1.0 \cdot 10^{15}$ molecules·cm⁻²). We note that the surface density of HNO₃ molecules when forming a complete monolayer is somewhat uncertain, and the density of $1.0 \cdot 10^{15}$ molecules·cm⁻² stated here should be considered an upper limit [Hudson et al., 2002]. If the HNO₃ surface density is lower than $1.0 \cdot 10^{15}$ molecules·cm⁻² for a complete monolayer, the resulting fractional surface coverages will be higher than those stated here. Application of the dissociative form of the Langmuir isotherm is supported here by spectroscopic studies of HNO₃ uptake on thin ice films at 211 K, which indicate, by the presence of H₃O⁺ and NO₃⁻ ions on the ice surface, that HNO₃ dissociates upon adsorption [Zondlo et al., 1997]. The temperature-dependent equilibrium adsorption constant in equation (2) can be calculated according to equation (3) [Adamson and Gast, 1997],

$$K_{eq} = \frac{100 \cdot N_A \cdot \sigma_0 \cdot \tau_0}{(2\pi \cdot M \cdot R \cdot T)^{1/2}} \cdot e^{\left(-\frac{\Delta H_{ads}}{c \cdot R \cdot T}\right)} \text{ hPa}^{-1}$$ (3)

where $N_A$ is Avogadro’s number ($6.02 \cdot 10^{23}$ mol⁻¹), $\sigma_0$ is the area of one adsorption site ($10^{-19}$ m²), $\tau_0$ is the time constant for adsorbate oscillation perpendicular to the surface ($10^{-13}$ s), $M$ is the molecular weight of HNO₃ (0.063 kg·mol⁻¹), $R$ is the ideal gas constant (8.314 J·mol⁻¹·K⁻¹), $T$ is temperature (in K), $c$ is a unit conversion factor ($2.39 \cdot 10^{-4}$ kcal·J⁻¹) and $\Delta H_{ads}$ is the adsorption enthalpy of HNO₃ on ice (in kcal·mol⁻¹).
Using equations (2) and (3), a Langmuir isotherm was fitted to the CRYSTAL-FACE observations of fractional surface coverage and P(HNO$_3$) (Fig. 12). Using the median temperature of 208 K for the observations shown in Fig. 9, the best fit to the experimental data was achieved with a $\Delta H_{ads}$ of $-11.0$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$, or $46.0$ kJ·mol$^{-1}$ (red line in Fig. 12). Note that the data are largely bound by $\Delta H_{ads}$ values of $-10.0$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$ and $-12.0$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$. Also shown in Fig. 12 are Langmuir isotherms at the same temperature for $\Delta H_{ads}$ values of $-14.2$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$ and $-12.9$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$ reported by Tabazadeh et al. [1998] and Hynes et al., [2002], respectively. Fractional coverages predicted using these previously published values of $\Delta H_{ads}$ far exceed the coverages observed during CRYSTAL-FACE, indicating these adsorption enthalpies are too high to accurately describe the observations presented here. Bartels-Rausch et al. [2002], using a chromatographic technique, have recently reported a $\Delta H_{ads}$ for HNO$_3$ uptake on ice of $-10.5$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$ that is in good agreement with the value of $-11.0$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$ presented here. We caution that the effective $\Delta H_{ads}$ reported here is empirically derived from observations in a dynamic system which may or may not be in steady state, and this value, therefore, cannot be considered a fundamental thermodynamic parameter. Nonetheless, the Langmuir formalism, using a $\Delta H_{ads}$ of $-11.0$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$, effectively describes the CRYSTAL-FACE observations of HNO$_3$ uptake on cirrus cloud particles to within a factor of 5 (Fig. 12). It should be noted that the data shown in Fig. 12 span a temperature range from 197 K to 218 K, and that the Langmuir isotherms were fitted at the median temperature of 208 K. Use of a single temperature in fitting the isotherms is supported by the results of Hynes et al. [2002], who reported a variation of less than 2% between values of $\Delta H_{ads}$ derived from laboratory measurements at 218 K and 228 K.

Having derived an effective value of $\Delta H_{ads}$ for HNO$_3$ adsorption on cirrus cloud particles in the UT, HNO$_3$ coverages predicted by the Langmuir surface chemistry model (as a function of temperature) can be compared to the CRYSTAL-FACE observations (Fig. 11b). As in Fig. 11a, the isobaric lines are colored on the same scale as the
observed coverages. The calculated coverages shown in Fig. 11b indicate that the model does not adequately describe the considerable variability in the observed coverages at a given temperature and $P$(HNO$_3$). Nonetheless, when using the empirically derived $\Delta H_{ads}$ of $-11.0$ kcal·mol$^{-1}$, the Langmuir model is capable of predicting the observed coverages within a factor of 5 or better. The variability in the observed coverages, and the less than perfect agreement with the uptake models, can be explained, in part, if the adsorbed HNO$_3$ is not in equilibrium with HNO$_3$ in the gas phase. Previous field studies have also shown HNO$_3$ surface coverages to be highly variable throughout the temperature and $P$(HNO$_3$) ranges observed [Kondo et al., 2002, Ziereis et al., 2003].

4.2. HNO$_3$ Partitioning in Cirrus Clouds

The fraction of total HNO$_3$ present on cirrus cloud particles was observed to increase with SAD during CRYSTAL-FACE (Fig. 13). The mean value of HNO$_3$ partitioned in the condensed phase at SADs greater than 200 $\mu$m$^2$·cm$^{-3}$ was 16%. Up to 100% of the total HNO$_3$ was partitioned on ice particles during some cirrus cloud encounters, at SADs between 350 and 4.2·10$^4$ $\mu$m$^2$·cm$^{-3}$ and temperatures between 201 K and 213 K. Measurements reported by Ziereis et al. [2003] in midlatitude cirrus clouds reveal a similar relationship between condensed-phase NO$_y$ partitioning and SAD, although maximum reported values of condensed-phase NO$_y$ partitioned in cirrus clouds did not exceed 50% of the total observed NO$_y$. Measurements of NO$_y$ uptake in a mountain wave cirrus cloud reported by Weinheimer et al. [1998] indicate complete uptake of HNO$_3$, provided that the ambient HNO$_3$/NO$_y$ ratio in the cloud was 0.1-0.2. Gas-phase HNO$_3$ was not measured in either of these previous studies, making an accurate assessment of the fraction of HNO$_3$ remaining in the gas phase after uptake difficult.

Krämer et al. [2003] have recently studied the partitioning of HNO$_3$ in Arctic cirrus clouds, and have modeled the role of HNO$_3$ uptake by interstitial HNO$_3$-H$_2$SO$_4$-H$_2$O ternary solution aerosols in partitioning. This study concluded that some fraction of the total HNO$_3$ in Arctic cirrus clouds must remain in the gas phase, with the remainder
partitioned predominately in interstitial aerosols at temperatures less than 205 K when SADs are low, and on cirrus cloud particles at higher SADs. Measurements in subtropical cirrus clouds reported here, however, indicate that up to 100% of the total HNO₃ can be partitioned in cirrus ice particles both at low temperatures and low SADs. Furthermore, we see no evidence of significant uptake of HNO₃ in ternary solution aerosols outside of clouds in the subtropical UT during the flights considered in this study. There is evidence, however, of HNO₃ uptake by ternary solution aerosols in the near absence of cirrus ice particles on at least one other CRYSTAL-FACE flight (July 9, 2002) [Weinheimer et al., 2002]. We also note that HNO₃ may be contained in a ternary solution on the surface of the cirrus ice particles.

4.3. HNO₃ and HNO₃/NOₓ in the Cloud-Free Upper Troposphere and Lower Stratosphere

Measurements in the cloud-free subtropical UT during CRYSTAL-FACE indicate that the gas-phase HNO₃/NOₓ ratio is highly variable, ranging from zero to approximately 0.5 (colored symbols in Fig. 14a). The HNO₃/NOₓ ratio is generally higher and also variable in the subtropical lower stratosphere (LS), with values observed between 0.05 and 1 (black symbols in Fig. 14a). HNO₃ is expected to be the predominate NOₓ species in the LS away from the tropopause region [Neuman et al., 2001]. The lower HNO₃/NOₓ ratios (< 0.3) observed in the UT are affected by low observed values of HNO₃, due to HNO₃ removal by uptake and sedimentation by cloud particles in cirrus processed air masses (yellow symbols in Fig. 14b), or from elevated levels of NOₓ due to NO production from lightning strikes (purple symbols in Fig. 14b). Previously measured values of the HNO₃/NOₓ ratio in the midlatitude UT over the continental United States were also highly variable and ranged from approximately 0.1 to 0.5 [Neuman et al., 2001]. The large range and variability of HNO₃/NOₓ ratios observed in the UT during CRYSTAL-FACE highlights the value in measuring gas-phase HNO₃ when assessing HNO₃ uptake on cirrus cloud particles, over deriving gas-phase HNO₃ from measured
NO\textsubscript{y} and a constant assumed HNO\textsubscript{3}/NO\textsubscript{y} ratio.

A number of cirrus clouds observed in the subtropical UT during CRYSTAL-FACE had VMDs between 200 \(\mu\)m and 700 \(\mu\)m. Terminal fall velocities for cirrus ice particles in this size range are 1 m s\(^{-1}\) to 10 m s\(^{-1}\) (Fig. 9a) [Meier and Hendricks, 2002]. With 16\% of the total HNO\textsubscript{3} in cirrus clouds adsorbed on ice particles, the gravitational redistribution of a significant fraction of the total HNO\textsubscript{3} in these clouds can therefore occur on a timescale of minutes to hours. Cirrus clouds with up to 100\% of the total HNO\textsubscript{3} partitioned in the condensed phase have even greater potential to redistribute HNO\textsubscript{3} in the UT.

5. Conclusions and Implications

A number of cirrus cloud encounters in the UT by the NASA WB-57F during CRYSTAL-FACE were accompanied by the observation of condensed-phase HNO\textsubscript{3}. Maximum levels of condensed-phase HNO\textsubscript{3} exceeded the gas-phase equivalent of 0.8 ppbv during some cirrus events. A mean HNO\textsubscript{3} surface coverage of 1.9 \(\times\) 10\textsuperscript{13} molecules cm\(^{-2}\) was observed on the flights of July 11, 13, 19 and 21, 2002, with maximum surface coverages reaching as high as 1.4 \(\times\) 10\textsuperscript{14} molecules cm\(^{-2}\) during a few cirrus cloud encounters. Molecular coverages predicted using a Langmuir surface chemistry model agree with the observed coverages to within a factor of 5 or better when using an empirically derived \(\Delta H_{ads}\) of \(-11.0\) kcal mol\(^{-1}\). The mean percentage of total HNO\textsubscript{3} condensed on cirrus cloud particles was 16\%, with up to 100\% of the HNO\textsubscript{3} partitioned in the condensed phase in a number of cirrus clouds. The fraction of total HNO\textsubscript{3} in the condensed phase was found to increase strongly with SAD. Based on the large diameters of cloud particles containing HNO\textsubscript{3} observed during CRYSTAL-FACE, the redistribution of HNO\textsubscript{3} in the UT will be very effective in some cloud systems. The interpretation of future observations of HNO\textsubscript{3} uptake on cirrus particles will be improved by a knowledge of the individual history of the air parcels in which the cirrus clouds are formed [Kärcher, 2003] and laboratory studies of HNO\textsubscript{3} uptake at low gas-phase
abundances \((P(\text{HNO}_3) < 2.0 \times 10^{-7} \text{ hPa})\) and low temperatures \((195 \text{ K} - 220 \text{ K})\).

2 Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the air and ground crews of the NASA WB-57F aircraft. Helpful discussions with J.P.D. Abbatt, E.R. Lovejoy and H. Ziereis are also appreciated. This work was partially supported by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Upper Atmospheric Research Program and Radiation Science Program. Work done by MJM at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, was carried out under contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
References


Figure Captions

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Figure 2. Time series measurements of the HNO\(_3\) mixing ratio observed from the front and bottom CIMS channels (HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{front}}\) and HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{gas}}\), respectively,) on the flight of July 11, 2002. Note that values of HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{front}}\) do not include a correction for particle oversampling in the front channel inlet. Discontinuities in the time series result from CIMS instrument calibrations and other housekeeping procedures. Also shown are SAD, IWC, water vapor, relative humidity (with respect to ice), and ambient temperature and pressure. All data are represented as 10-s averages. Minor divisions on the horizontal scale represent 15 minutes (or approximately 150 km) of flight.

Figure 3. Same as Fig. 2, for the flight on July 13, 2002. Purple bars in panel (b) represent 3 flight segments in which cirrus clouds formed in the contrail of the WB-57F were observed. The inset in panel (a) shows 1-s averages of HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{front}}\) and HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{gas}}\) during the first contrail intercept. The purple bar in the inset represents the same time period as the first purple bar in panel (b). The vertical scale on the inset panel is 0 to 1 ppbv. Measurements of HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{front}}\) and HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{gas}}\) are incomplete during the second and third contrail intercepts due to instrument housekeeping procedures.

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Figure 5. Same as Fig. 2, for the flight on July 21, 2002.

Figure 6. (HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{front}}\) - HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{gas}}\)) vs. SAD for the flights of July 11, 13, 19 and 21, 2002. Values of (HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{front}}\) - HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{gas}}\)) are proportional, but not equal to condensed-phase HNO\(_3\) (HNO\(_3\)\(_{\text{con}}\)) because they do not include a correction for particle
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**Figure 10.** HNO$_3$ coverage vs. temperature for measurements made in cirrus clouds at SADs greater than 200 $\mu$m$^2$cm$^{-3}$ on July 11, 13, 19 and 21, 2002. Symbols are colored according to $P$(HNO$_3$). Triangles at temperatures less than 200 K indicate measurements made under conditions in which NAT is stable. Mean values of HNO$_3$ coverage are plotted at the mean of 5 K temperature bins from 195 K to 220 K (black squares). Error bars represent the standard deviation in each temperature bin. Negative values of HNO$_3$ coverage are included in the calculation of the mean values. The dashed line at 1.9$\cdot 10^{13}$ molecules$\cdot$cm$^{-2}$ represents the mean HNO$_3$ coverage observed during CRYSTAL-FACE. A complete HNO$_3$ monolayer is formed when the coverage reaches 1.0$\cdot 10^{15}$ molecules$\cdot$cm$^{-2}$.

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**Figure 14.** Panel (a). Vertical profile of the gas-phase HNO₃/NOₓ ratio observed in cloud free air (SADs less than 20 μm².cm⁻³) during the flights of July 11, 13, 19 and 21, 2002. Tropospheric measurements (according to the Microwave Temperature Profiler) are colored according to measured NO. Stratospheric measurements are shown in black. Panel (b). Vertical profile of HNO₃_{gas}. Other details same as panel (a).
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\(^a\) Precision values are reported for 10-s averages

\(^b\) 10 pptv is the precision for condensed-phase HNO\(_3\).
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