



Mike Doyle is the President of the CAGC – the Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors - representing the business interests of the seismic industry within Canada. The CAGC website may be found at www.cagc.ca.

The winter season is almost upon us. Commodity prices remain solid; the electricity blackout in Eastern North America has caused a refocusing on the Energy sector. Something that we all take for granted – the flick of a light switch – was suddenly gone. The need for an energy plan not only for Canada but also for the whole of North America came into perspective. Energy is sexy again.

This all occurs at a time when Canadian natural gas exports to the US are continuously falling due to supply gaps; at a time when LNG imports from overseas into the US are constantly rising in order to meet the increasing US demand coupled with the falling Canadian supply. There is no doubt our interests in Canada will continue to push into unexplored areas and farther into new frontier areas.

Seismic is still the necessary component before the rest of the work in the oil cycle can take place. Our industry has downsized – or perhaps right sized – this past year. This normal market activity is not a bad thing overall. Prices will bump up as demand outstrips supply.

The CAGC has spent a lot of time this past year in training – not only our own people but also regulators and clients. Seismic is viewed as the saviour in the battle against cumulative impacts. Narrowing the line has the greatest, quickest effect of any industrial activity. This comes at a price however. For the time being, equipment to create and service narrower lines remains under supplied and generally comes at a cost premium.

The exercise planned for the Doodletrain this year deals with this issue – the understanding of cost parameters as they relate to a really seismic job. In the full spectrum of options what effects costs and how? Our struggle over the past few years has been to encourage companies to get their geophysicists to the field – to gain an understanding on how same inferences in the office can make large differences in the field.

We have taken the opportunity this past year to conduct field trips for interested regulators, trainers, bureaucrats, and even members of other Associations. The greater the societal knowledge is of the operations, the better chance we all have to invoke change. We still feel the greatest area of lack of operational knowledge exists at the company geophysicist level. A year has passed since I wrote the article on the “The Geophysicists’ disconnect with the Field” and despite the large amount of training and field trips we have put on this past year we have failed to get to the level of the geophysicists.

We held our Annual Geophysical Seminar in Red Deer with some 350 registrants. It was impressive to see the calibre of attendees and the large variety of walks of life they came

from. However the thread of seismic ran through all. The Seminar was a plethora of information. We ran panels on the environment, forestry, water; prime contractor issues and so on – today's leading edge concerns. The seminar is designed so that an individual could come out of Calgary and spent the day, return in the evening and still catch the majority of the seminar (we run a couple of panels on the 2nd day morning). However, once again, despite the large attendance numbers, we lack the geophysicists.

It is hard to believe that the intermediaries can supply enough understanding all of the time to overcome program flaws and cost overruns. As we move more and more into an electronic world, savings in time is replaced by production. We, as creatures of habit, gain comfort with what the computer programs tell us and when that isn't enough we can rely on the knowledge of someone else. This philosophy has to be questioned. If we need to continue to develop technology to further assist us (as the advent of the 3-D did), must we not understand each other?

We have an extremely interesting industry. The progression in technology over the last decade, the progression in equipment, in environmentally friendly applications – these are all stories to tell the world. Be part of it – come see the work in the field – it will be worth your time in the long run!

From The Thursday Files:

***We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.***

- Aristotle