

A little spring clean-up before the summer starts! The Oil and Gas Industry has slackened off since the boom of last year; however as seismic is usually slower to respond on the upside we are also slower to respond on the downside. As such a lot of our focus has shifted from conventional gas to both oilsands work and foothills work. The summer looks busy as the spec companies continue to shoot large programs in the foothills and companies begin to sniff around some of the frontier basins in BC. The seismic industry has repositioned itself over the last 5 years with sounder business principles and less of the “keep it cheap” mentality. In its own right – seismic is king – the tool is essential to risk mitigation. We see a stronger positioning of the spec market with items such as Aboriginal Consultation, Public Engagement, and Environmental Issues. We see an increased use of production seismic—the 4-D tool. With fewer players in the market there should be greater resistance to slipping back into the “keep it cheap” mentality of the 1990’s that ended up with the industry spiraling downwards.

The Aboriginal issue in Alberta remains a difficult issue to manage for many small to medium sized players. We certainly hear about challenges for small oil companies and in some fashion this transcends across industries – small to medium sized seismic companies face similar difficulties. We have maintained an ongoing meeting structure with Alberta SRD and AB Aboriginal Affairs (their new name is much longer) with occurrences every two months. Look for some further guidance in the revised guidelines due out in early summer.

We have begun a discussion with Saskatchewan on line widths. This is also a difficult issue as over time the line widths, by Government policy, have continued to narrow. The challenge we find ourselves in today is that the work is pushing north of the farmlands and into the forests. Due to access challenges, safety concerns and equipment constraints we simply can’t get the work done under the stringent line widths dictated to us. In any case it is promising that we are talking.

The CNSOPB (Nova Scotia) and Industry are in final discussions over release of non-exclusive (spec) seismic. They have agreed that spec seismic is important to their business model and have come to the table with much greater concern for our business. It would appear that an agreement will be reached between industry (CAGC and IAGC) and the Government. This is important as it could have implications on other jurisdictions in Canada.

Our BC Geophysical Conference will be held in Fort St John, BC on June 20 and 21. It contains all the latest issues affecting seismic in BC. Lots of changes on the horizon with OGC considering a new Geo Manual, new regulations proposed in the future (OGRII), changes to public engagement and more. This always attracts a large number of Industry, Oil Company types and Regulators.

Our AB Geophysical Seminar is scheduled for Red Deer on September 19 and 20. This is our biggest seminar of the year attracting participation from all the Western Provinces. Both seminars accompanied by golf events are always a lot of fun mixed in with the learning.

Seismic in Motion—our one-day field trip held over three days in October (October 2,3,4) is our largest outdoor showcase event. In 2006 we put through some 500 people and worked closely with the CSEG Outreach committee and the CAPP Geophysical committee to host 150 high school students and their teachers. We will continue this partnership with the Calgary Board of Education and hope it remains a successful and rewarding relationship.

It is the CAGC’s 30th Anniversary and we are celebrating by putting on a number of events—Horse Racing, Charity Casino, MS Walk, Murder Mystery Dinner, and our first Annual SloPitch Tournament. All proceeds in excess of costs will go to Charity. We will end with a Homecoming Event in November to celebrate all those involved in the industry over the past three decades.

On the training side the highly anticipated Wildlife Awareness CD for the OilPatch Worker and Supervisors will be available through Enform by the end of June. We believe it will be a tremendous product for use within our industry and outside. The trailer for it is available for viewing on the Enform website at www.enform.ca under What’s New. Enform is continuing to branch out into the E-Training both through the Internet and through CD training. You can view other new products they have available in the same area.

As we launch into our summer season, summer holidays and other timely pursuits, we here at the CAGC, wish everyone a safe and prosperous summer. Travel safe! **R**

From the Thursday Files:

I've learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our dispositions and not on our circumstances.

– Martha Washington

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

