

PDAC and the global community
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More than any other event on Earth, the annual PDAC Convention, Trade Show and Investors Exchange is the international meeting place for those engaged in exploration and development of the world's mineral resources. The combination of technology, projects, and the dominance of Toronto as a source of funds for these activities is irresistible to people from more than 100 countries.

In 1993, the PDAC started to market its convention to the world. By 1995, 433 international delegates from 51 countries participated, comprising 17% of all delegates. Then a slow but steady growth began and in 2006 a total of 2,726 visitors from 100 different countries attended the convention, representing 28% of total delegates. In 2006, the biggest group came from the United States followed by the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America, Australia, UK, Europe, Asia, Africa, China, South Africa and Brazil.

In addition to delegates, suppliers have increasingly been coming to Toronto to sell their goods and services to the world of exploration. In 1995, 28 foreign firms and 78 of their personnel exhibited in the trade show. By 2006 this had grown to 195 companies and nearly 1,000 people. Again the US is the leading source, followed by Europe, Australia, Latin America, Asia and Africa.

But PDAC's interest in the world is not limited to welcoming visitors at its convention. In the last few years, usually as the result of specific invitations, the PDAC has sent staff and board members to other meetings and conventions in countries such as Brazil, Australia, China, the Philippines, and Russia. These are wonderful opportunities for us to represent the Canadian mining industry. Our ambassadors often give presentations on topics such as exploration in Canada, exploration technology, and the Canadian junior mining sector, and assist other groups in organizing national associations with missions similar to the PDAC.

Governments also benefit from what they learn through the PDAC and its convention. In 2001 the government of South Africa was undertaking a major revision of its exploration and mining laws. Government representatives formally asked for PDAC's advice on how the proposed amendments might have an impact on foreign investment in the country, and it was given.

Every two years, beginning in 2000 a World Mines Ministries Forum (www.wmmf.org) has been held in conjunction with the PDAC convention. These are gatherings at which mines ministers and their staffs from mining jurisdictions around the world can discuss issues of common interest and learn best practices about mining legislation and regulation from each other and from expert presenters. Also participating in these meetings are industry representatives, NGOs, First Nations, labour organizations, and academia. These gatherings benefit Canadian and other explorationists who are active across the world. In 2006 representatives from 30 countries participated in the World Mines Ministries Forum.

The PDAC is an association member of the International Council on Mining & Metals (www.icmm.com). The vision of ICMM is a viable mining, minerals and metals industry

that is widely recognized as essential for modern living and a key contributor to sustainable development. PDAC brings the voice of Canadian and international exploration to this important global organization that is striving to make the mining industry better for all concerned.

The association represents the exploration sector in international meetings on a wide range of topics, including issues relating to indigenous peoples, land-use planning, regulations involving international institutions, and NGOs. In 2006, the association was represented in a series of roundtables on corporate social responsibility of Canadian mining companies operating outside Canada. The roundtables were organized by the Government of Canada.

Well known for its advocacy in Canada, the PDAC has been reaching out to the world. For example, its e3 Environmental Excellence in Exploration program is a comprehensive, Internet-based toolkit that offers leading examples of environmental and social behaviour in exploration (www.e3mining.com). In addition to English and French, the site also functions in Spanish and Portuguese to best communicate with Latin America.

Plans are also in the works for a set of universal health and safety guidelines for use by large or small exploration companies. The object of the guidelines will be to provide companies with a means to operate globally with the target of zero accidents both in exploration and in contractor operations.

Looking ahead, the PDAC sees growth on the international front. It expects continuing growth of the participation of foreigners in the convention and plans to enhance its activities and communications with the world. In 2005 the PDAC established an International Affairs Committee to provide direction for the PDAC's place in the global community.

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