

PDAC convention: Another successful year

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What a difference a year makes. Last year at this time the economy had hit rock bottom and miners were in shell shock. Their decline in fortunes had been swift and hard. Today there is an air of exuberance as delegates look forward to the coming year with enthusiasm.

Commodity prices have been going in the right direction and financings are starting to prime the exploration pump. Good times appear to be here again.

The convention again attracted national representation from countries around the world looking to promote their mineral potential. Delegate attendance broke another record this year with over 20,500 people poking around or listening to talks. The mining and exploration industry must be breathing a sigh of relief as about 900 student delegates were registered. For an industry staffed by aging employees this will help to carry on Canada's mining and exploration tradition. Now it is industry's responsibility to give them summer jobs for that all important work experience and gainful employment upon graduation.

For many delegates and trade show people the convention is looked upon as a good time - a chance to see old colleagues, catch up on the last year and have a drink or two together, but it was not all fun and partying. The quality of talks and short courses offered by the PDAC was high. Many talks were standing room only and short courses were well attended.

The crush of delegates was well handled and the Convention Centre coped well with the numbers. However, more chairs and tables should be made available near the food venues during the lunch hour. It is awkward to sit on the floor in a suit or dress while trying to eat your lunch.

Audio visual presentations went well to the relief of speakers and listeners alike.

A cloud did hang over the convention. The PDAC launched a campaign to let delegates know about Bill C-300, a private member's bill in the Canadian Parliament that has the potential to grievously hurt Canadian-based mining and exploration companies. Buttons and brochures were handed out to delegates asking them to participate in a letter writing campaign to their MPs to let them know that this bill should be stopped.

Finally, it was a time of change for the PDAC. Wednesday saw the installation of a new president for a two-year term. Scott Jobin-Bevans takes over from Jon Baird to lead the organization for the next two years. Jon's will be a tough act to follow if the success of the convention is anything to go by. Good luck, Scott!