

Safety in the air begins on the ground: a message to all stakeholders of airborne geophysical surveys

Safety in the air begins on the ground has been IAGSA's motto since its formation in 1995. IAGSA, the International Airborne Geophysics Safety Association, is a Not-for-Profit member-run global organisation dedicated to the safe operation of aircraft conducting geophysical surveys. Through the active participation of our membership, IAGSA develops recommended practices, serves as a centre for the exchange of safety information, and acts as a repository for specialised statistics.

Because we are not a regulator, our impact on our Members and the safety of the industry as a whole is based on how well we can influence our many stakeholders. Our Active Members are directly engaged in airborne data acquisition while our Associate Members are either service providers to their clients or end users of the data, including many of the world's largest mining companies. Non-member stakeholders include regulators, safety consultants, communities that give the airborne geophysical industry its license to operate, as well as many mining- or exploration-companies that contract our Active Members to perform work on their behalf.

In these challenging economic times for the mineral exploration industry in general, and for the airborne geophysical survey industry in particular, we would like to remind all our stakeholders of the importance in remaining focussed on one of the core missions of IAGSA, which is to ensure that survey companies and their clients alike follow a common safety standard. Safety considerations must always trump economic pressures and technical factors.

We know from experience that through their constant focus on safety, many of our Associate Members are able to positively impact IAGSA's goals by

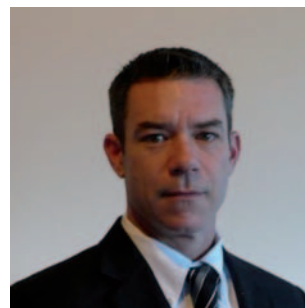
ensuring that their standards are passed down to their airborne contractors. As a service, IAGSA performs a Safety Review with all of our Active Members to provide guidance and assistance towards the implementation of IAGSA's recommended practices, document their present level of compliance, and highlight Notices of Difference between their practices and our recommendations. More and more of our Associate Members are now including membership in IAGSA as a prerequisite in their survey procurement process, and some are now requesting to see the most recent Safety Review before awarding a contract. Our Active Members operate in all parts of the world using a wide variety of aircraft, and the ensuing conversation between Active Member, client and IAGSA is where the real value in IAGSA's existence lies.

It is here that IAGSA's motto of safety in the air begins on the ground really rings true. Although an airborne contractor's flight operations are of great importance to us, many of the most important decisions that directly impact the safe operation of an airborne geophysical survey are made during the tendering process: the elevation-drape being requested, the type of aircraft being provided, the safety culture of the contractor, and the competence of the organisation including the crew members who will fly the survey.

In the ideal world we would like every stakeholder in airborne geophysics to not only be a member of IAGSA but to wholeheartedly follow our recommendations as well. Regardless, when it comes to IAGSA's goal of safe airborne-geophysical operations, membership is beside the point because the onus of due diligence is a responsibility of all stakeholders. IAGSA is available to answer questions

related to the safe acquisition of airborne geophysical data irrespective if the enquiry comes from a Member or not. Furthermore, our 'Contract Annex For Exploration Companies' is also freely available from our website (www.iagsa.ca) and we strongly encourage any company, whether an IAGSA Member or not, to take consideration of IAGSA's recommended practices in your airborne geophysical survey planning and append this annex to your next airborne geophysics contract.

On behalf of IAGSA for the safety of us all,



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