



Link Line

AN UPDATE FROM OMR ON YOUR MINE RESCUE PROGRAM

ISSUE #37 WINTER 2018



A LITTLE TO THE RIGHT - Using a charged hose, a Glencore Strathcona Mill's Emergency Response Team member refines his nozzle handling skills as he navigates a case through a maze of orange cones.

Emergency Services Training more than 'just firefighting'

Despite the 'emergency' allusion to flashing red and blue lights, and loud alarms, Ontario Mine Rescue's Emergency Services Training Division has a quiet profile.

But that doesn't bother the division's newest Emergency Services Specialist Scott Gillett, a trained mine rescuer with experience as a volunteer firefighter, who joined OMR and the division earlier this year.

Started about 10 years ago and then headed by the late Mine Rescue Officer Shawn Kirwan, the Emergency Services Training (EST) Division offered specialized courses in surface emergency response outside the core OMR underground program to Ontario and out-of-province mining operations.

As in underground mining, surface emergency response in industry has progressed beyond "just traditional firefighting," said Chief Emergency Services Officer Tim Ebbinghaus, the division's manager.

The expectation now, Ebbinghaus said, "is that brigades are capable in effectively and safely responding to hazardous material

exposures and spills, confined space rescues, and emergency medical aid situations."

Despite not having the 90 years of industry exposure of OMR's underground program, the division's two staff – Ebbinghaus and Gillett – both have full training schedules.

"I've seen a lot of Ontario I hadn't seen before," said Gillett, who has travelled not only to instruct courses in firefighting, hazardous material response, and confined space rescue to Ontario mines, but to upgrade his own knowledge and skills in emergency response.

"We can't be satisfied just knowing how to do something," said Ebbinghaus. Just as for Mine Rescue Officers, specialized emergency response requires continual knowledge and skills development, and awareness of advances in procedures and technology.

"We want to be able to do it (emergency response) at a high level," Ebbinghaus said, "so we can train emergency responders to perform at their highest level."

Gillett shared his learning experiences during a recent refresher training exercise with a

six-member squad of Glencore Strathcona Mill's Emergency Response Team, showing scorch marks on the outside of his turnout coat from his own training.

"That's (the turnout coat) no longer suitable for use in fire response" or fire exercises, he said, explaining that though the outside is only scorched, the interior filling has been compromised by the extreme heat.

The day included two-minute drills – donning all protective equipment including activating breathing apparatus as quickly as possible; hose drills – deploying, using and recovering multiple 50-foot hose sections; a lifting bag exercise; and a site tour to review locations of fire hydrants.

"Because if there's a fire, you're going to need water," the emergency services specialist told the team, "and you should know the closest place to get it."

With maintenance and upgrading training for himself, a suite of emergency response courses to present, and refresher training in those courses, Gillett does not expect his job to become routine, especially as more mines and industrial operations knock on the door.

Tahoe Canada ‘Fastest in World’

International competition ‘Unforgettable experience’

Teams from Russia and Kazakhstan placed first, second and third overall at the 2018 International Mines Rescue Competition (IMRC), but they couldn’t keep up with Ontario Mine Rescue champions Tahoe Canada Timmins West and Bell Creek Mines.

“We have the Fastest Team Award,” said Tahoe Canada Captain Adam Weagle, of the recognition received at IMRC2018 in Ekaterinburg, Russia, during the final week of September.

“We’ve been laughing . . . We’re the fastest team in the world.”

But time is critical in emergency response, and “time seemed pretty critical” in the competition, said Weagle. “So we focus on being fast. Even in Ontario, we’re a fast team. We move fast; we make decisions fast.”

And speed paid off with recognition at the 11th IMRC. Dominated by Russian teams, the competition featured 24 teams from 11 countries.

Tahoe Canada was one of two Canadian teams. The second, Diamonds in the Rough, an all-woman team drawn from other provinces, received the People’s Choice Award.

“The experience was unforgettable,” said Weagle. “It had an Olympic vibe about it. In the opening ceremonies, it felt like you were in the Olympics. They had a parade of countries. So they took every country, and they brought every team on stage.”

“I’ve been to a lot of competitions, and you feel the competition vibe but this time you didn’t. Everyone was together; it was a cool feeling.”

The competition included a mine rescue simulation, firefighting, first aid, theory, technician, and virtual reality events staged over three days. Tahoe Canada mine rescuers hit the ground running on their first competition day with the mine rescue simulation – a search and rescue scenario set underground in a gold mine.

“They told us it was the oldest gold mine in the world. It was over 200 years old. That was pretty cool. We went down and they said it was the original shaft.”

The team completed its task in 75 minutes, but team members had no time to rest before they moved on to the firefighting scenario set inside a fire training structure simulating a room and pillar mine. The team, working through the structure, had to search for missing workers; set up a burlap barricade; and extinguish fires – a conveyor belt fire, a compressor fire, and a diesel fire.

Later the team learned the scenario replicated a coal mining operation.



TEAM TAXOЕ КАНАДА – From left, #2 Sylvain Falardeau, Captain Adam Weagle, #3 Nick Schwehr, #4 Mat Johnson, #6 Rick Martin. Missing Briefing Officer Terry Roy, and Vice-captain Pierre Gagne.



FIRST BRIEFING – Tahoe Canada Captain Adam Weagle reviews instructions from Briefing Officer Terry Roy, while an IMRC judge (standing), and the team interpreter Molly Myagmarbat observe.

“We just went to it, and did what we thought we should do,” said Weagle. “When we got to the hotel afterward, we were talking to the Australians, and they told us that it was a coal mine scenario.”

Weagle doesn’t think the coal mine scenario was a handicap for his team, though the

theory exam “which was all based on coal mining, was a little bit hard for us . . . we don’t know much about coal mines.”

A little coal mining challenge was not the only new experience for the team.

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Different approaches to briefings, oxygen use

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“The briefing was a little bit different. It was not a team briefing,” said Weagle, who received one-on-one briefings directly from Briefing Officer Terry Roy without the team present. Then “I went back (to the team and) said, ‘This is what Terry wants us to do’, and off we went.”

And the Russians “are very big on oxygen conservation.”

Unlike here where teams get under oxygen before they are likely to encounter contaminated air, usually outside the headframe, in Russia “you go down barefaced,” he explained. When “your monitor goes off, you’ve hit contaminants. Oops! Stop! Back up a little bit to fresh air, and then get under oxygen.”

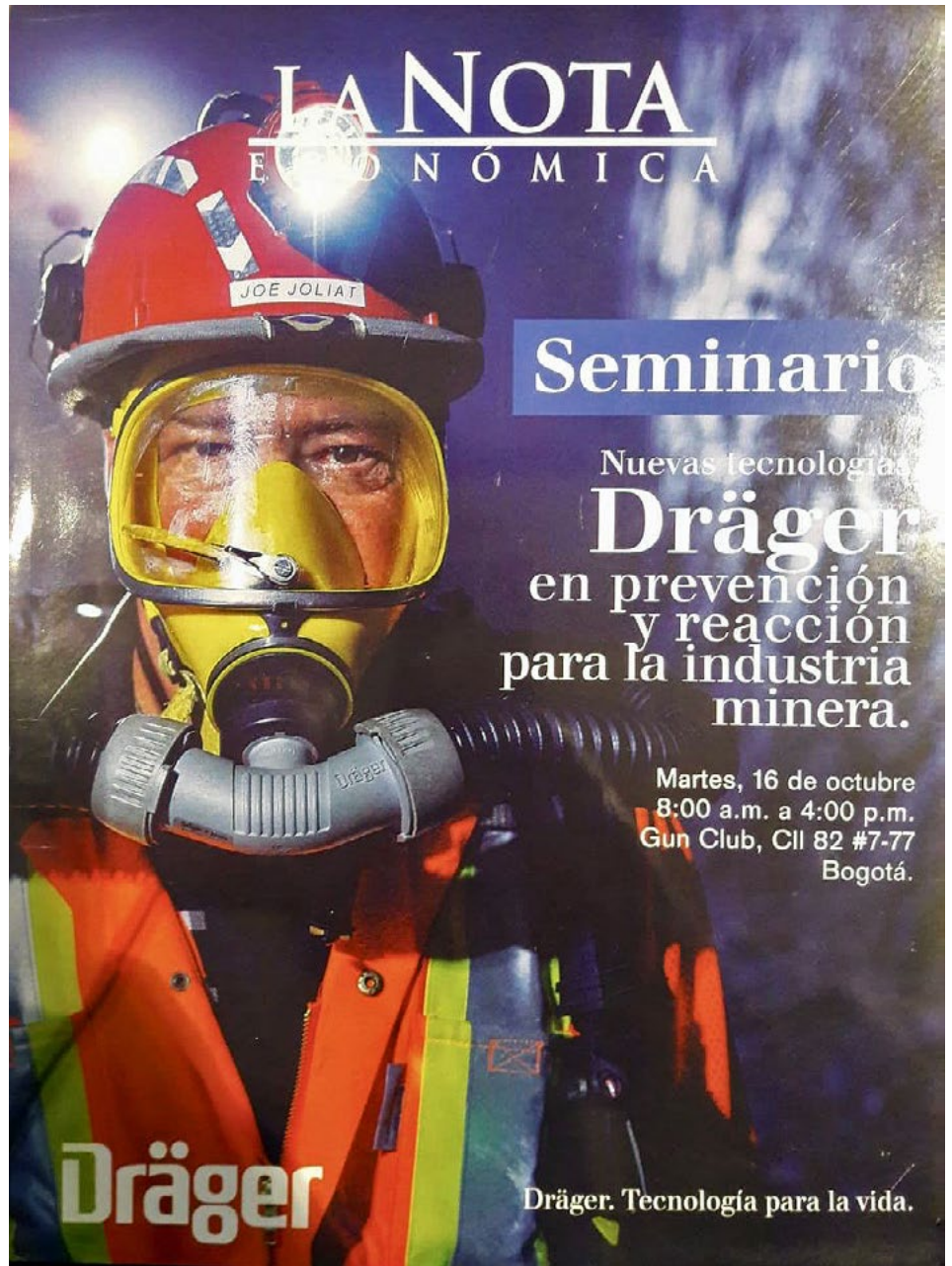
The conservation measure meant “we actually did the underground portion and the firefighting portion with the same BG4 (breathing apparatus) charge.”

Weagle said, “I’m very proud of my team. They worked hard all week in Russia, and really all year for me. They’re awesome guys.”

And the team, he said, is “very appreciative of all the support from our community, Northern College and the (Timmins) fire department. Tahoe Canada has been great to us, great support from our management,” and from the Ontario Mine Rescue Officers who helped train the team for the competition.

Tahoe Canada sent the team, which included volunteers from Timmins West and Bell Creek mines, to the IMRC in recognition of their winning three consecutive Timmins District competitions and the 2018 Ontario Mine Rescue Provincial Competition.

The team consisted of Captain Weagle, #2 Sylvain Falardeau, #3 Nick Schwehr, #4 Mat Johnson, Vice-captain Pierre Gagne, #6 Rick Martin, Briefing Officer Terry Roy, Technician Dan Guillemette, Coach Jim Davis, Interpreter Molly Myagmarbat, and Tahoe Canada Director of Health & Safety Jordan Vince.



JOE JOLIAT, POSTER BOY – Longtime Timmins volunteer Joe Joliat, unmistakable even behind a mask, served as a poster boy for a Draeger seminar earlier this year in Bogota, Colombia, for new technology in accident prevention and emergency response.



ALMOST THERE – Thanks to Loye Halteman and Mark Melanson who identified two more members of the 1993 Red Lake District champion Dona Lake Mine rescue team. From back left Eric Dalzell, unknown member, John McCuaig, unknown member, Dave Towle, and front left Dave Villeneuve, Mike Dorward, and Luc Major. If you can identify either of the final two members, please email kensitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca.

OMR's Technical Advisory Committee

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Vacant

Kirkland Lake District
Industry Representative:
Vice Chair Dan Demers,
Alamos Gold,
Young Davidson Mine

Onaping District
Industry Representative:
Chair Jim Lundrigan,
Glencore Nickel Rim South Mine

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Industry Representative:
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(Musselwhite Mine)

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Jim Ahrens,
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Industry Representative:
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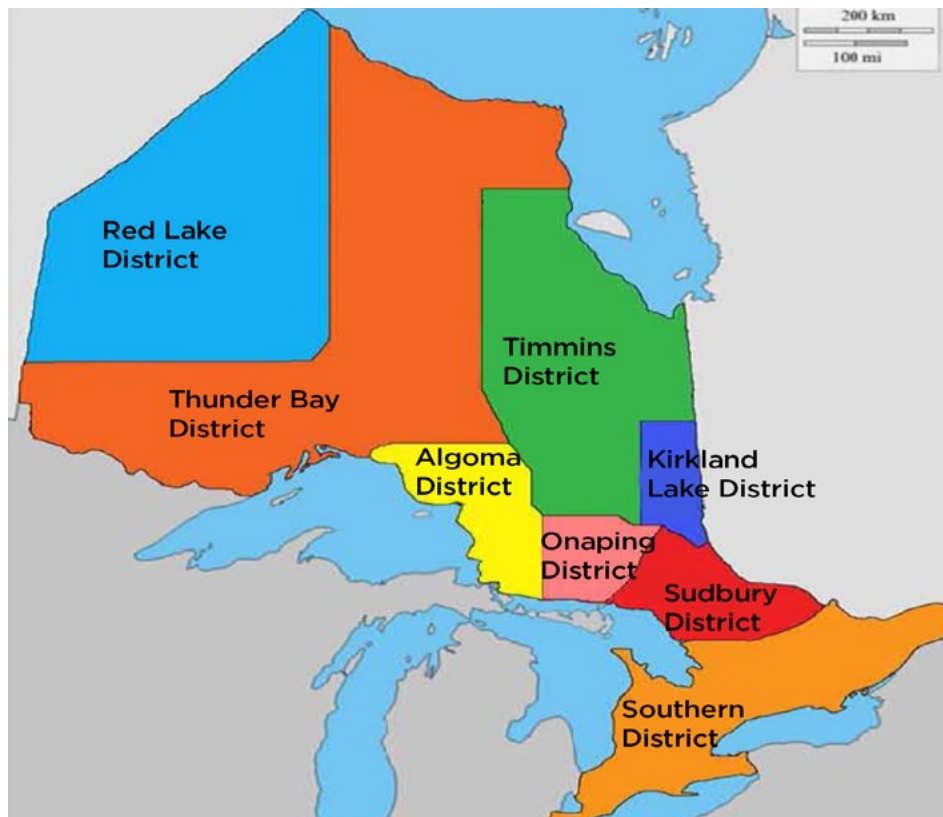
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Ontario Mine Rescue
Ted Hanley

**Contact information for TAC
members can be found at**
workplacesafetynorth.ca/minerescue



Thunder Bay, Algoma bid adieu to each other

Twenty years after Elliot Lake/Algoma District and Thunder Bay District started to compete as one district, they will compete as separate districts again in 2019.

The development of new mines has increased the number of mine rescue volunteers in the unified district to almost 200, the largest district roster across the province, Chief Mine Rescue Officer Shawn Rideout told the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

As separate districts, Algoma will have approximately 100 volunteers, and Thunder Bay about 90, Rideout said, but ongoing developments in both districts will see the rosters continue to grow.

New substations have been opened recently at Goldcorp's Borden Lake Mine near Chapleau, and Harte Gold Corp.'s Sugar Zone Deposit, near White River. Both are in Algoma District.

With the closure of Stanleigh Mine, the last uranium mine in Elliot Lake in 1997, Elliot Lake/Algoma District started to share district competitions with Thunder Bay District in 1998, and administratively merged in 2000.

The change means the two districts will

Mine Rescue appointment

Ontario Mine Rescue (OMR), a part of Workplace Safety North, welcomes the addition of new Mine Rescue Officer Ted Greenwood.

Greenwood will share responsibility with Mine Rescue Officer Mike Krell for training and emergency response activities in the "new" Algoma District. He will report to Chief Mine Rescue Officer Shawn Rideout.

After completing his Introductory Mine Rescue Training in 2011, Greenwood received an Advance Mine Rescue Certificate, and actively served at both Island Gold and

conduct separate competitions in 2019, resulting in eight district teams once again in the Provincial Competition.

To facilitate the separation, a second Mine Rescue Officer will be hired and based in Algoma District, and a district industry representative will be recruited for the TAC, Rideout said.

TAC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Gord Paddock, of North American Palladium's Lac des Iles Mine will remain the representative for Thunder Bay District.

Other changes to the committee include the appointment of Andre Lefebvre, from Glencore's Fraser Mine, as the volunteers' representative. He succeeds Mike Dudar, who stepped down earlier this year after more than 15 years of service on the TAC.

Lefebvre, a mine rescue volunteer since 2007, invited questions and comments from all volunteers. He can be reached at: andre.lefebvre@glencore.ca.

Also Shaun Carter succeeds longtime member and recent retiree Scotty Robertson, as the Ministry of Labour's representative.

Barrick Hemlo Williams Mine, until December 2017, when he left mining.

Greenwood is an active member of the White River community where he lives. Recently re-elected, he is a second term councillor for the Township of White River, where he is also a longtime member of the volunteer fire department.



Ted Greenwood



STUMPED AGAIN? - Oops! Apparently there are no familiar faces in Stanleigh Mine's 1993 mine rescue team which represented Elliot Lake/Algoma in the Ontario Mine Rescue Provincial Competition. If you can identify any member, please email kensitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca.



WHO IS THAT? - We know who they are, Canadian Salt Co.'s Ojibway mine rescue team which represented Southern District in the 1998 Provincial Mine Rescue Competition in Timmins. But we don't know who is who. If you can identify members of the team, please email kensitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca.

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