



## Regulation and Public Policy

### Scot Anderson, Chair Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation

by Tomás de la Calle

The Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation (RMMLF) held their every-two-year meeting last April (from 22nd to 24th). This time they picked Colombia for the first time ever, more specifically: Cartagena. HCC attended and Tomás de la Calle took advantage of the opportunity to interview Mr. Scot Anderson the Chair of the Steering Committee.

**Thanks Scot for this interview and welcome to our country. Let's start simple: What is RMMLF? What do you do?**

Well, RMMLF was started in the late 1960's by a bunch of oil and gas and mining practitioners who wanted to have a foundation to provide educational services to the petroleum and mining industries. So, it's very focused on legal issues affecting oil and gas, mining, natural resources, public lands, water; it's grown dramatically since 1960's and it has international programs but lots of programs in the US. The design is to make sure that in addition to just doing a conference where people talk about issues, they also do scholarly papers and there's also a lot of review that is part of it. So really it is designed to provide the literature and the background and share expertise in the natural resource development field.

**In particular we learned you were the one who started the Oil and Gas section. Please, tell us about it?**

This program has been around for a while; there's kind of an international mining program that was in the US. And the International Mining Program went into Caracas and Lima for two years, Santiago for two years, and then in 2007 we decided that we wanted to add the oil and gas component to the international

side, that is when we started designing a program that had kind of a general session to start with, that was of interest to everyone working in the field and then separate tracks for the mining lawyers and oil and gas lawyers. And so, we did that in 2007 and 2009 in Buenos Aires, in 2011 in Rio, and then in 2013 this year here in Cartagena.

**Why did you choose Colombia this time?**

I'd been here once before, and knew Cartagena would not have any problem. Part of it is we like to repeat our programs in cities: we've been in Rio, but with the World Cup and the Olympics coming ahead it was very expensive and we wanted to put it in a place where people could get there, and it was funny because we decided to do it in Rio again but people got focused on Cartagena very quickly. And I think there were a lot of reasons: Cartagena is a great city to have a conference, beautiful place, people like to go there, its very convenient for people to travel to. But also Colombia is really on the cusp of some very big developments in both oil and gas and mining and I think the perception of Colombia is that it's a favorable place to work in oil and gas and mining resources; it's got a well developed body of law, administration is very stable, the expropriation risk is low and so on.

The idea was that this would be a good place and we like to include the local element in the conversation of what's happening in the host country for the conference. So, Colombia was a great place, just a great jurisdiction to talk about and a really wonderful place to have a conference. So we decided on Cartagena very quickly, once we

decided we were not going back to Rio.

**How many people attended? Was the number in line with your recent international conferences?**

About 350 people this time. Just under this figure that attended to Rio in 2011. We had few more than that in Buenos Aires in 2007, but in 2009 with the global financial crisis, we had 260. So 350 is a very good number for us.

**What is the profile of the attendees?**

You know, it's a legal conference, so I'd say 99% were lawyers. About 60% are from Latin America, 30% from the US and Canada, and about 10% from other places like Europe, Africa and Asia.

**And what is the split between the two tracks: oil and gas and mining.**

I think about 60% attended mining and 40% petroleum. Part of the reason for that is the tradition in mining. The petroleum part is catching up and would not be surprised to see 50/50 next time. And also there are many lawyers like me that practice in both: oil and gas and mining. So there are a few who go back and forth between the sessions.

**So the next conference is it going to be Cartagena again?**

It's not decided yet, but everybody loved Cartagena, and my recommendation to the committee will be to come back. We do like coming to the same city again; it's a kind of stability, people know how to find their way around. So, I'd guess that we will be coming back.