

OCGC SEMINAR Honesty—Avoiding the Misuse of Models

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Honesty is a basic principle of geoscience ethics. We all use models but all models are incomplete and flawed. Nevertheless, some models are useful in assisting understanding of a particular system. Honesty requires disclosure of the limitations and deficiencies of a particular model. Modern computer modeling permits examination of complicated models but these models are still not “the truth.” Professional judgement is still required in determining the utility of a model and to guard against self-deception.

David Abbott, AIPG Certified Professional Geologist-4570, is a consulting economic geologist specializing in the due diligence review and audits of reserve and resource estimates, in the review of disclosures about natural resources disclosures, the review of mineral exploration and development programs for precious and base metals, and industrial minerals, and writing about professional geoscience ethics. Prior to becoming a consultant in 1996, he spent 21 years as a geologist for the US Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), where he reviewed the natural resource aspects of filings made in the Denver and Los Angeles Regional Offices and investigated the natural resource aspects of enforcement cases, usually involving unfounded claims that reserves existed. He is an active member of the SME's Reserves and Resources Committee, which developed the SME's 1991, 1999, 2007, 2014, and 2017 *A Guide for Reporting Exploration Information, Mineral Resources, and Mineral Reserves*. He has authored numerous papers and given numerous speeches on the interplay between geology and the securities laws, particularly those relating to the definition of reserves, other aspects of professional geological practice, and over 50 papers on geoscience professional ethics. He compiles the “Professional Ethics & Practices” column for the American Institute of Professional Geologists. He is a fellow of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, the Geological Society of London, the Society of Economic Geologists, and the Geological Society of America. He is a member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the Rocky Mountain Association of Geologists, and the Mining & Metallurgical Society of America. He received an A.B. in earth sciences from Dartmouth College and an M.S. in geology from the Colorado School of Mines. He is a licensed professional geologist in Wyoming, Texas, and Utah and holds the titles European Geologist and Chartered Geologist (by the Geological Society and The AusIMM).



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