

Rail Connection Survey for Iron Mining Project

Republic of Congo based Mining Projects Development Company (MPD) are looking to develop the Zanaga iron ore project located in the South Western region of the Republic of Congo. MPD appointed Southern Mapping Company (SMC) in September 2009 to perform an air to ground survey for a potential rail infrastructure. The survey assignment stretches from Zanaga in the South Western Congo to Point Noire harbour, which will be used for outbound shipments of the ore.

During the 1960s, the Congo Government initiated prospecting work which suggested 500 million tons of iron ore on various sites. The country is considered to have a world class iron ore deposit.

Colin Ord is the SMC spokesperson for the project which was awarded to the company against international competition: "During the survey we covered 95,000 square kilometres to measure the optimal route for the railway line which, once installed, will have more than 300 kilometres of track. We installed the latest Lidar technology on a Caravan 308 aircraft which was flown in from Nigeria where we are engaged with other assignments. This is a typical green-fields project and we surveyed in total two different line options, measuring 780 kilometres from Zanaga to Point Noire.

Ord says that, being just south of the Equator, the SMC team had to conduct their work in extreme temperatures of 38°C and a humidity factor of 160 and that the terrain presented a challenge in terms of air to ground measurement with dense bush and vegetation in places. "The weather was a real barrier for progress of the project and we had to adjust our work schedule. Our first attempt was in October 2009 when we experienced twelve weeks of cloud cover with only a few hours of being airborne during that time. We redeployed our team in February and completed the aerial survey in March this year," says Ord.

Southern Mapping Company has delivered the Lidar data and Digital Terrain Maps (DTM) to MPD. Due to the complexity of the project, the rail line analysis is still in processing stage, but well ahead of schedule.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/rail-connection-survey-for-iron-mining-project>
