



Chief Operating Officer Paul Cadmore leads a collaborative work environment at the company.

## FLYING HIGH

Campbellford's Team Eagle is a world leader in airfield safety  
BY KEELY S. THOMPSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENNIFER GY. LAM

IMAGINE YOU'RE IN THE COCPIOT OF A COMMERCIAL JET landing on a slippery runway during a snowstorm with more than 300 passengers on board. There are countless challenges at work — thrust, gravity, weather systems, weight — and while your experience assures you a safe landing is possible, questions remain: How much braking distance do you need, is there a layer of ice underneath, what about scattered debris on the tarmac? Later, Team Eagle from Campbellford, whose business is helping pilots and airports answer these and other critical questions. The company improves safety by developing specialized software and equipment, and today its products are used in more than 100 countries.

Team Eagle was started by Steve McKewen, who'd

been in the airport-equipment business for decades. He was searching outside bustling Toronto for a location for his company and discovered Campbellford's charms, its rolling hills and related lifestyle. McKewen's right hand is Chief Operating Officer Paul Cadmore, who took on that job in 2004 after working in agriculture. Originally from Ferguson, Ontario, and holding a BSc and MBA, he joined Team Eagle looking for a career change, and also because he and his wife, who has family in the area, fell in love with Northumberland County.

Airports management is a complicated beast with a lot of moving parts, and accidents can be fatal and costly. "We had bold ambitions," says Cadmore of Team Eagle's philosophy. "We put our efforts toward

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what to go out and ask a lot of questions about what airports were finding challenging on the airfield." The result is a company that provides products that help with common runway and airport issues, such as excursions (when a plane on wheels inadvertently cuts the runway), incursions (when something is on the airfield that shouldn't be), foreign object debris, birds, wildlife, snow and ice. It includes itself as offering equipment and software that "solve aviation's largest problems."

"They'll think outside the box to get you a solution," says Robin Hullett, Manager Inside Operations for the Ottawa Airport Authority. "It's not an off-the-shelf service that they provide, it's tailor made." In fact, the company keeps a growing list of tech ideas (more than 100 now) generated by its team, and is constantly innovating.

Cadmore recalls a customer who had safety issues with a particular runway section, and asked Team Eagle to create a simple GPS-based warning for anyone who was about to drive across that area of the airfield. "So we did. It was the start of our ability to provide safety logic to the vehicle operator, helping that success. Team Eagle was asked to work with the Federal Aviation Administration in the U.S. for a 16-month research project in Atlantic City on Runway Ingression Warning Systems.

Most innovative of all of Team Eagle's creations is its new Braking Availability Tester (BAT), a machine that sits on a regular vehicle chassis and replicates runway braking to test safety measures and precautions in live time. "BAT is the most ambitious product to date," says Cadmore. "It takes all of our combined capability and experience." Initially conceived in 2007, the machine records data based on weather and other conditions, and feeds valuable information to the airport and pilot about braking times and other safety details. The data also informs other elements of runway management — including snow and ice removal — saving airports time, money and lives.

In 2016, the Canadian Government awarded Team Eagle a \$50,481 contract to provide the BAT system to Transport Canada. The contract stemmed from the Build in Canada Innovation Program designed to help Canadian innovators land their first major sale. The BAT has been in testing at the Ottawa International Airport since February 2017, and Team Eagle continues to develop and hone the machine's abilities, with industry testing at other airports and partners planned for this winter. After successful testing, the BAT will be on the market for airports around the world.

**COLLABORATIVE WORK CULTURE**  
The team in Team Eagle is central to the company's success. "We have a very inclusive, open culture," says Cadmore, who's responsible for promoting that culture. The 45 employees are highly valued and encouraged to develop their own ideas. For this reason, while Cadmore admits there are educational requirements for many roles, the engineers and technicians, the company prizes people who embody its ethics, creativity and respectfulness.

Partnerships with manufacturers and suppliers are vital. "Since the company doesn't manufacture all of the equipment it sells, it relies on strong partnerships with other businesses that produce similar values." The selection of the partners is very important and they have to have both the products we're interested in and also a culture that supports how we want to look after our customers," said Cadmore. Equally important to Team Eagle's success is an advisory board of business people who don't necessarily work in the aerospace industry but who contribute ideas and support to this entrepreneurial venture.

Community and government support are also core values. The largest air force base in Canada, in Trenton, as well as several nearby airports, have welcomed Team Eagle and provided testing space and insights. Cadmore also acknowledges the wealth of support — financial and advisory — offered by the investment at all levels. Beyond the Innovation Grant, Team Eagle is working with the Business Development Canada and is enrolled in the Growth Driver Program. "That basically puts a discipline towards picking your areas of growth and the strategic planning needed to achieve that growth," says Cadmore. "So we have access to some pretty savvy business people."

It's in these established workplace relationships that Team Eagle sets itself apart from other competitive airfield companies. Robin Hullett notes that while the company initially was tendered contracts with the Ottawa Airport Authority, it's the customized approach that continues to build trust and a thriving relationship in a highly competitive marketplace.

Excellent service, superior products, a collaborative work culture and commitment to partnerships have put this Campbellford company on the world map. Next time you're coming in for a landing at Pearson Airport in a snowstorm, think about our local heroes at Team Eagle, the people who make those days safe. **46**

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