



CERTIFICATION *Insider*



The Voice of Other: Certification in Pennsylvania

By Debbie Dickinson, Executive Director, Crane Institute of America Certification, Inc. (CIC)

A Kentucky comedian, Carl Hurley, has a favorite saying, "You might as well laugh." Hurley describes situations that could make a person mad, sad or ecstatically happy. The Pennsylvania State Board of Crane Operators, and those of us working with the Board, can appreciate the comedian's sentiment as changes impacting the crane and rigging industry are upon us and creating some out of the ordinary situations.

For example, the State Legislature and Crane Board began work several years ago. They did not have the benefit of knowing what the new OSHA regulations would say until after their statues were in place and regulations near finalization. Knowing that hindsight is 20-20, the timing of the work in the "State of Independence" and OSHA's release of information surfaced interesting points for consideration.

Foundation

The main goal of the Pennsylvania Crane Board and Legislators was to promote safety and save the lives of the people working near or with cranes. During one of the final work sessions in Pennsylvania, OSHA released a preview of its long awaited new regulations, which contained the most extensive updates in 41 years. The new laws helped clarify some points in Pennsylvania and added questions other places.

License Without Certification

A grandfather clause and related proposed regulations in Pennsylvania allows a short period of time for crane operators in Pennsylvania to obtain a license without

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In This Issue

[New Regulations Announced](#)

[Legacy of Self Governed Industry: Who Decides?](#)

Quick Links

[Certification Registration Process Information](#)

[Mobile Crane Certification PREP TRAINING](#)

[Rigger/Signalperson Certification PREP TRAINING](#)

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certification. While this practice is allowed under pending Pennsylvania regulation, it is not allowed under new OSHA regulations. The new OSHA regulation and most other states and municipalities require accredited certification of crane operators or the cost and labor intensive documentation of an employer based program. Operators working in other states and who need to be in full OSHA compliance will need to achieve accredited certification for the crane types operated.

Who is "Other?"

When Pennsylvania wrote its initial laws and drafted regulations for crane operators, NCCCO was the most well known, accredited certification provider. However, long before the proposed regulations were completed, other accredited certification providers, such as Crane Institute of America Certification (CIC), were accredited, recognized by OSHA and began certifying crane operators in Pennsylvania. The good news is that the legislators in Pennsylvania had the foresight to include a clause to allow "other" certification providers to certify crane operators. The sticky point was that Pennsylvania also stated that to be approved "other" providers had to be equivalent to NCCCO.

Numerous problems and debates surfaced because NCCCO is not an industry endorsed benchmark or standard for certification. In fact, several worthy, accredited, OSHA recognized providers compete directly with NCCCO to the benefit of the industry. Thus, the State Board of Crane Operators had the monumental task of defining equivalence in terms that would satisfy the intent of the law. The stakes and emotions were high as many operators who live or work in Pennsylvania had already chosen to be certified by a provider other than NCCCO. These operators had earned a fully accredited, OSHA recognized certification for the crane types they operate. In addition, the OSHA rules avoided any mention of a particular provider by name but gave clear criteria that each of the four, NCCA or ANSI accredited providers met.

Equivalence Defined

Sunshine laws in Pennsylvania, State Attorney Christopher McNally and the State Board of Crane Operators, Chaired by Anthony Lusi, opened the door to all concerned. Executive Directors from ANSI, NCCA, CIC, NCCER, NCCCO, and the OCEP all commented and sent representatives or attended work sessions. Points were researched and debated. Proposed regulations were edited and equivalence was defined in a manner that is keeping with the intent of the law to recognize accredited certification from "other" providers. It was unfortunate that the Pennsylvania law named one entity and that three equally qualified entities are simply known as "other." However, when the day was done, the regulations agreed to by the State Board, corrected the major issues. While final wording is not available (at the time of this writing), key points from the State Board defined "equivalence" to include:

- ANSI or NCCA accredited certification - an important change was "or" not "and." (Dual accreditation is a marketing, not quality of certification issue)
- OSHA recognized
- Tests based on ASME B30 Standards and current interpretations
- Tests by written examination and practical examination on the crane types the operator operators

In summary, CIC gladly accepts the position of "other." Our goal is to provide Pennsylvania and the nation with affordable, NCCA accredited, OSHA recognized certifications. CIC is happy to report that it meets the criteria specified by the State Board and Federal OSHA. We look forward to continued work with the State Board and legislature. In several instances, members of the certifying community



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collaborated and worked together to provide information, broaden perspective and research to the State Board. Similar opportunities to assist in other locations and situations are welcome and in progress in numerous other states.

Crane Institute of America Certification, Inc. (CIC) provides certification for of crane operators, riggers, signalpersons, advanced riggers and crane certifiers. For more information, visit: <http://www.CICert.com> or call 763-476-4242. CIC certifications are NCCA accredited, OSHA recognized and test on the ASME B30 standards.

NEWS RELEASE: NCCA Recognized as OSHA-Approved Accrediting Agency for Crane Operator Certifications

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NCCA RECOGNIZED AS OSHA-APPROVED ACCREDITING AGENCY FOR CRANE OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, DC - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has recognized the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) as a top national accrediting agency approved to accredit crane operator certification programs in the United States.

The new OSHA rule on cranes and derricks in construction requires all crane operators in the United States to be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency and cites the NCCA as a primary example.

"The NCCA accreditation program is the leading provider of high quality accreditation services focusing specifically on the credentialing community. By specifying the NCCA in this updated rule, OSHA has recognized the NCCA's long standing commitment to quality and integrity," said Institute for Credentialing Excellence Executive Director Jim Kendzel. "This is a testament to the fact that NCCA accredited crane operator certification programs meet the most recognized level of national standards for determining the competence of certified crane operators. NCCA is proud to play such an important role in ensuring quality and public safety."

NCCA accredited crane operator certification programs can be found on the ICE Web site at <http://tinyurl.com/ncca-accredited-programs>. The complete OSHA rule on cranes and derricks in construction is available at http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2010-17818_PI.pdf. The regulation text is available at <http://www.osha.gov/cranes-derricks/index.html>. This new rule will take effect on November 8, 2010.

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About the NCCA and the Institute for Credentialing Excellence

Established in 1977, ICE (formerly NOCA) is the leading international membership organization representing the credentialing community. ICE fulfills its mission through the delivery of education and training programs, in setting quality standards for credentialing, and by providing accreditation services through its accreditation division, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). ICE's membership is composed of credentialing organizations, testing companies, and individual professional development consultants. Through its annual conference, Webinars, and publications, ICE serves as the source for information on the latest trends and issues of concern to practitioners and organizations focused on certification, licensure education/training and workforce development. ICE and NCCA are based in Washington, DC. The Web site address is www.credentialingexcellence.org.



The Standard in Certification

CIC Certifications test crane operators, signalpersons and riggers on knowledge and use of knowledge and skill in applying ASME B30.5 Standards, OSHA Regulations and safe operation with and around cranes.

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