

CERTIFICATION NEWS

FROM



Signalperson Certification Program Launched *NCCCO Seeks to “Close the Loop” in Crane Operations*

October 1, 2008, Fairfax, Virginia – The National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) announced the introduction today of its much-anticipated certification program for signalpersons.

The new program meets or exceeds all current and proposed standards and regulations that require personnel providing hand signals to crane operators to be qualified. It is designed to ensure that crane operators receive accurate information about where loads need to be placed, particularly important when lifting “in the blind.”

For the first time, signalpersons will be tested on their understanding of basic crane operations and limitations, in addition to their knowledge of hand signals and voice communications. Both written and practical tests are required.

The program follows the intent of the latest revision of the ASME B30.5 Mobile and Locomotive Crane and ASME B30.3 Construction Tower Crane standards, as well as the OSHA Proposed Rule (otherwise known as C-DAC) that will revise Subpart N of the Code of Federal Regulations for cranes.

With the signalperson program, NCCCO was presented with the challenge of developing a program that was fair and accurate in scope, yet easily administered to a large population. NCCCO’s standard certification model of written, practical and recertification examinations has been retained. However, a new computer-generated and delivered practical examination is a new exam platform for NCCCO practical testing.

“This practical exam requires candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the signals without the use of actual cranes or crane operators,” said Dr. Anthony Mitchell, President of International Assessment Institute (IAI), NCCCO’s test development and services provider. “The development process ensures that the certification process is fair, valid, reliable, and legally defensible,” he added.

NCCCO unveiled its plans for development of the new program in February 2007 and began a process that brought together subject matter experts, psychometricians, and its own experienced staff to develop a program heavily demanded by the industry. “The need for a signalperson certification program was a top concern for the crane industry,” said NCCCO President, John Kennedy. “We have built a quality certification program that is expected to have an immediate impact on crane safety.”

Key to the effective development of the new program has been the diligent work of the subject matter experts who met eight (8) times over a 13-month period at varying host sites across the nation. "The dedication of this task force far exceeded my expectations," said Kenny Shinn, Signalperson Task Force chairman. "This group of individuals volunteered their time and expertise to develop an effective program we can all be proud of."

Commission Chairman, Kerry Hulse, acknowledged the efforts of the firms and organizations that hosted meetings who provided their generous donations of facilities and hospitality. "The support from these groups shows their continuing dedication to the CCO program," he said. "The signalperson program development process was a success, and these groups played an important role in it."

Hosts and co-hosts that volunteered from California to New Jersey included: Operating Engineers Local 3, Atlantic Crane Inspection Services, George Young Company, Ironworkers Local 405, Operating Engineers Local 542, Operating Engineers Local 825, K.J. Shinn Inc., Ironworkers Local 25, BP America, International Assessment Institute, and Operating Engineers Local 18.

"We have had great success to date in fulfilling NCCCO's safety mission through administration of our crane operator certification programs," said NCCCO Executive Director, Graham Brent. "The already heavy pent-up demand for the signalperson program, coupled with our effectively designed certification examinations, will ensure a higher level of crane safety and professionalism in this industry."

The signalperson certification program is NCCCO's fourth personnel certification program. The success of the mobile, tower, and overhead crane operator programs led to the industry's request of NCCCO to develop a similar qualification process for signalpersons. Full program information, including Candidate Handbooks and Test Site Coordinator Handbooks, are available from www.nccco.org

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BACKGROUND

The National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) is a non-profit industry organization formed in January 1995 to develop effective performance standards for safe crane operation to assist all segments of construction and general industry. Since NCCCO began testing in April 1996, more than 325,000 written and practical exams have been administered to over 65,000 crane operators in all 50 states.

CCO certification has been nationally accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) since 1998, and by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) since 2007. The NCCCO crane operator certification program is the only program to be recognized by federal OSHA as meeting OSHA and ASME (ANSI) requirements for crane operator competency. The program is unique in that it is: third-party; independent of training; developed and supported by industry; a joint labor/management initiative; psychometrically sound; validated through peer review; and administered on a standardized, secure, nationwide basis.
