



**NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR THE CERTIFICATION
OF CRANE OPERATORS (NCCCO)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NCCCO Announces Plans for Tower Crane/Overhead Crane Operator Certification Programs

Fairfax, Virginia, March 19, 2003--The National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) has announced plans for the development of two new crane operator certification programs. The new programs will address overhead crane operators and tower crane operators.

"The success of NCCCO's certification program for mobile crane operators has led to sustained industry requests for similar programs to address operators of other types of equipment," said NCCCO President, Ronald Schad. Schad is President of Essex Crane Rental Corp., Buffalo Grove, IL. "Given the widespread adoption of its mobile crane program, and the endorsements it has garnered, NCCCO is the appropriate entity to develop and administer these new programs."

Development of the overhead crane operator certification program will be a collaborative effort with the Crane Manufacturers Association of America (CMAA) which has lent its full support to this project. "We are delighted to join with NCCCO in developing this important new program," said CMAA Managing Director, Hal Vandiver.

"NCCCO and CMAA share many mutual goals, notably providing employers with a fair and independent method of verifying operator qualifications, and making the work place safer and more productive for all employees," Vandiver added.

Kerry Hulse, Operations Manager of Deep South Crane & Rigging, Houston, TX, who serves as Chairman of NCCCO's Commission, noted that the new programs would draw on three major resources: financial support, subject matter expertise, and psychometric guidance. "All elements of the new programs will be developed according to the strict psychometric standards that have been a hallmark of the mobile crane operator program, thus ensuring the certification process will be valid, reliable, and legally defensible," he said.

NCCCO would model the new programs on its existing mobile crane operator certification program, Hulse added. "Among the certification requirements that will be considered are written examinations, practical examinations, physical (medical) requirements, an experience requirement, and a recertification requirement," he said.

To optimize resources, NCCCO plans to double-track development of both programs through two Task Forces, one each for Overhead Cranes and Tower Cranes. David Ritchie, St. Paul Construction, Bastrop, TX, has been appointed chair of the Tower Crane Task Force, Hulse

announced. The Overhead Crane Task Force is chaired jointly by John Alexander, Cranetex, Thorndale, TX, and Pete Kerrick, Morris Material Handling, Oak Creek, WI, he said. Kerrick also serves as chairman of CMAA's Crane Manufacturers Service Committee.

Experts in their respective fields will staff the Task Forces, and will be guided by psychometric consultants. Other experts will serve as item writers. A professional Job Task Analysis will be conducted to serve as the foundation for exam development activities.

The types of cranes under consideration for inclusion in each program will be determined by the Task Forces, Hulse said. Among the Tower Cranes proposed are top- and bottom-slewing cranes; top- and bottom-climbing cranes; rail-mounted tower cranes; and luffing jib tower cranes. The Overhead Crane Task Force will consider for inclusion: cab- and pendant-operated types; single/double girder, underhung/top-running bridge cranes; gantry cranes, hoists, and monorail systems.

NCCCO Executive Director, Graham Brent, stated that development would begin in the second quarter of 2003 and continue throughout the year. "By any definition, this is an aggressive development program, with five subject-matter expert meetings anticipated this year alone, beginning in early spring," he said. "However, if we maintain good progress, both programs could be ready for introduction by the end of the first quarter 2004."

The National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) was formed in January 1995 to develop effective performance standards for safe crane operation to assist all segments of general industry and construction. Since NCCCO began testing in April 1996, more than 20,000 crane operators have been tested through over 1,000 separate test administrations conducted in 48 states.

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.