

CERTIFICATION NEWS



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Industry Forum Focuses on Personnel Qualifications

Operators, Lift Directors, Inspectors all need to be Qualified, Experts Say

Fairfax, VA, November 30, 2015—The first NCCCO **Industry Forum on Personnel Qualifications** was an unqualified success according to those who attended the event in October.

The Forum, hosted by the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO), was the first of its kind in the industry to focus entirely on the qualification of personnel working in construction. Held in Washington, DC, it featured presentations by senior staff from Federal OSHA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as well as industry experts in their field.

Operator qualifications were a major theme of both presentations, made respectively by Jim Maddux, Director of OSHA's Directorate of Construction, and Al Wong, Construction/Operations Program Manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), aided by Jerry Balcom, recently retired USACE Loss Control Program Manager.

Maddux confirmed that OSHA was continuing to work on a Proposed Rulemaking on the crane operator qualifications issue, and that there would be "positive resolution" in 2016. Asked whether OSHA's proposed language would be based on the draft submitted to the Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health (ACCSH) committee earlier this year, Maddux stated that the ample feedback OSHA had received at—and following—the ACCSH meeting would ensure "without a doubt" that "what we propose will be different."



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Wong and Balcom outlined some of the newer provisions of the recently released edition of the USACE EM-385 Safety and Health Requirements Manual, and they announced that the Corps was moving away from wholesale revisions of the manual in favor of ongoing updates. "In the future, it will be like a living document," said Balcom. The new process would allow changes to be made section by section or even by page, with an explanation of why the change had been made, he said.



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Industry experts, Hank Dutton, Technical Specialist, Construction for Travelers Insurance, and Ray Feidt, Inspection/Training Manager, Stephenson Equipment, Inc., also emphasized the importance of appropriate credentials for those engaged in lift planning and crane inspection, respectively.

In addition, Dutton noted that OSHA, which references lift directors no less than 44 times in its Compliance Directive, had now begun issuing citations to employers who had not designated individuals to that function on their jobsites.

Also featured at the Forum were presentations on developments in regulatory affairs relating to personnel qualifications at state, federal, and international levels provided by NCCCO staff, along with reports on test integrity and certification program development.

The Industry Forum on Personnel Qualifications was designed as an interactive event, with questions of the presenters being invited from the floor. “Many in the industry do not often get the chance to meet and discuss one-on-one with those in federal government who make and/or enforce the standards employers have to comply with,” said NCCCO Director of Operations, Joel Oliva. “The NCCCO Industry Forum provided just such an opportunity.”

“We are extremely heartened at the reception to the inaugural NCCCO Industry Forum,” said NCCCO CEO, Graham Brent, who cited the event as another example of NCCCO in its 20th anniversary year actively fulfilling its mission to serve as an authoritative industry information resource. “Based on the overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees, we shall be laying plans for future events of this type,” he noted.

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The [National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators \(NCCCO\)](#) was formed in January 1995 as an independent, non-profit organization by industry to develop and administer a nationwide program for the certification of crane operators and related personnel. Since then, NCCCO has administered over 950,000 nationally accredited written and practical examinations and issued more than 280,000 nationally accredited and OSHA-compliant certifications in all 50 states. For the latest NCCCO news, follow [@NCCCOorg](#) on Twitter.