

## PROFILE

# Pursuing his career in Canada suits Irish crane operator well

## Dublin native recounts his smooth experience with finding work in B.C.

AMANDA SAFFIOTI  
SPECIAL TO CRANE & HOIST CANADA

**W**ith the Canadian construction industry fast approaching a peak in projects and not having enough skilled trade workers to fill job openings, industry leaders are looking for solutions and the crane industry is no exception.

“When a skill shortage hits, it hits us hard,” said Fraser Cocks, executive director of the B.C. Association for Crane Safety. “While there are always new people coming into the mix, we can only train them so quickly. When that is in place and functional and there is still a skill shortage, you have to reach above and beyond. That is what is happening now.”

For 36-year-old David Cresswell from Dublin, Ireland, this concept of companies reaching above and beyond led to his Canadian job search being a smooth experience. Cresswell, with 10 years of crane industry experience under his belt, immigrated to Canada to continue his tower crane operating career.

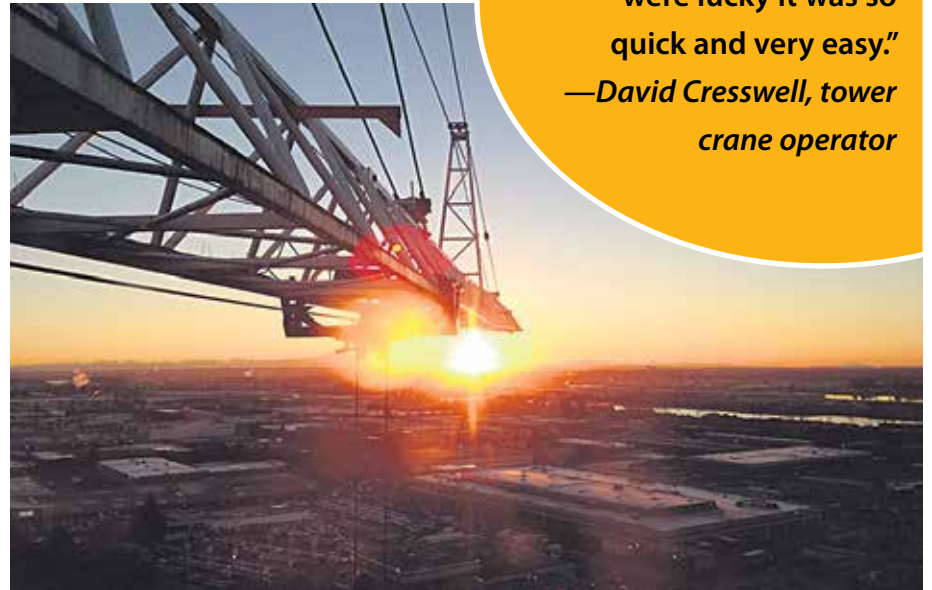
“Everything was just staggeringly quick. We were lucky it was so quick and very easy,” he said. The whole process from when Cresswell first contacted the BCACS to his first day on the job in Canada was about five weeks.

Cresswell was living in London for two years with his now-wife, Tracey, before he began looking to Canada for work. Geographically, his choices were B.C. or Alberta whichever enabled him to come over first. Patricia Johnson from the BCACS got the ball rolling for them by putting him in contact with Abigail Fulton, vice-president of the B.C. Construction Association. The following weeks were chock full of email exchanges, resume formatting and certification preparation.

“From the first time I spoke with them it was only two weeks until I got a call from a company for my first position in Canada,” Cresswell said. “I was lucky.”

Cocks explained that another factor in reaching abroad for workers is the uniqueness of the crane industry, which has small numbers but is an extremely significant trade.

“If a crane operator doesn’t show up, there could be 200 people that can’t do their jobs as a result; as if the electricity were shut off and no one could work. A crane is in the



Dave Cresswell. Canadian employers are looking abroad for such trades people as tower crane operators.

“Everything was just staggeringly quick. We were lucky it was so quick and very easy.”  
—David Cresswell, tower crane operator

centre of any construction project, which is a major factor in understanding why we are experiencing this shortage of operators today,” Cocks said.

The crane industry is also a very high risk, high liability world, Cocks added. The people who do this work have to be well-trained, consistently safe, and professional. With Cresswell’s training and experience in the U.K. and Ireland, he possesses the type of skills that attract the interest of Canadian industry employers.

When employers and workers do find their match, the BCACS, as the industry certifying and standards-setting organization, will help individuals such as Cresswell navigate the system and obtain the correct certification equivalency to sit ‘in the seat’ and get to work.

“The last thing we want is for someone to come here and not be able to work for three months; nobody wants that outcome,” Cocks said.

“It’s definitely worth a call just to be sent in the right direction,” Cresswell said. “I was lucky. As long as other people have their stuff ready, they (the BCCA and BCACS) are ready to help anybody.”

A new job is not the only thing Cresswell has to smile about in Canada, as he walked down the aisle to wed his sweetheart this past August. Cresswell met Tracey in 2008 backpacking in Perth, Australia, and has been with her “every single day since the very first day.” It was actually Tracey who wanted to explore Canada after Cresswell’s work visa was coming to an end in Australia. Moving from city to city was nothing new the couple, who explored for a few years before having the opportunity to settle in B.C.

While Cresswell has not decided whether he will be staying in B.C. or Alberta yet, he definitely knows one thing for certain:

“We absolutely love it here,” he said. “We can’t wait to see more of Canada. Now that I have residency, I can finally call somewhere home. If I decide later to try working somewhere else in Canada, such as Alberta, I have that choice.”

**Editor’s Note:** The preceding article was submitted by the B.C. Association for Crane Safety.

**Magneto Electric**

905-625-9450 (DAY)  
416-930-5858 (AFTER HOURS)



[www.magnetoelectric.com](http://www.magnetoelectric.com)

## WORKING TOGETHER TO REACH NEW HEIGHTS.

We are complete electro-mechanical service providers, made up of an industry-leading team of experts who work fast and get the job done right. Magneto services a variety of equipment including AC-DC Motors, generators, welders, pumps, and transformers. We also sell new motors, pumps, drives and soft starts.

### REWIND. REPAIR. REBUILD

- Motors AC and DC
- Servo motors, drives, encoders
- Generators
- Transformers, coils magnets
- Gear motors, clutches, pumps
- Vacuum pressure impregnation
- Machining

### PREDICTIVE MAINTENANCE

- Winding analysis
- Vibration analysis
- Oil analysis
- Infrared thermography
- Laser alignment

### FIELD SERVICE

- Certified confined space
- Equipment removal
- Equipment reinstallation
- Electrician services
- CO2 high pressure cleaning
- Dynamic balancing

