

National Occupational
Council of Canada



Conseil National du
Travail du Canada

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A Model for International Mutual Recognition of Skilled Worker Credentials

**– Ireland, USA, and British Columbia, Canada Crane Operator
Credentials**

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A Model for International Mutual Recognition of Skilled Worker Credentials

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1.0 Background

The ESDC/CHRSC Multi-Jurisdictional Crane Operator Regulation Certification Comparison and Reciprocity Initiative's main objective was to build a method and model to be able to negotiate and draft Memorandums of Understanding for a Crane Operator Credential Recognition Reciprocity Agreement between Canada and Ireland and between Canada and the appropriate agencies in the USA, regarding Mobile Crane Operator and Tower Crane Operator credentials.

A secondary objective was to develop an online multi-jurisdictional viewer that would enable a crane operator to determine where he could work based on the crane operator certificate that he possessed from his home jurisdiction.

The project lead was the Canadian Hoisting and Rigging Safety Council (CHRSC). The CHRSC is a national industry-led organization working toward common outcomes regarding hoisting and rigging standards across Canada.

The BC Association for Crane Safety (BCACS) implemented the project on behalf of CHRSC. BCACS works closely with industry, labour and government to implement new standards of assessment and certification that make for a safer workplace. BCACS administers a comprehensive, inclusive credentialing regime to support the goal of accident free crane operations throughout British Columbia.

The project start date was February 19, 2014 and was completed as of December 31, 2015.

2.0 Recognition and agreements

2.1 Mutual recognition agreement – Ireland

It was determined that for Ireland, a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for crane operator credentials could be signed by the Irish Apprenticeship Authority (SOLAS). It became apparent that in Canada, there is no national entity that could sign this same agreement. BCACS representing British Columbia put into place the necessary mechanics and protocols required to sign on behalf of the jurisdiction of British Columbia representing Canada.

WorkSafeBC advised BCACS that based on their review of the project outcomes, the SOLAS crane operator certification process was acceptable to the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia (Board) for the purpose of section 14.34.1 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR)*.

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between SOLAS (An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna) and BCACS, took place in Dublin, Ireland on September 16th, 2015. The MOU allows for the mutual recognition of Mobile Crane Operator and Tower Crane Operator credentials. The agreement is entitled: Memorandum of Understanding for the Mutual Recognition of Crane Operator Credentials Issued in Respect of the Jurisdictions of Ireland and British Columbia, Canada 16th September 2015.

2.2 Credential recognition – USA

USA crane operator certifying agencies recognized by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the USA (OSHA) as authorized to certify crane operators in the USA are: The Operating Engineers Certification Program (OECF), Crane Institute Certification (CIC), The National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO), and The National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER). Two of the four agencies participated in the CHRSC project; these were OECF and NCCCO.

WorkSafeBC advised BCACS that based on their review of the project outcomes, the NCCCO, and OECF crane operator certification processes are acceptable to the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia (Board) for the purpose of section 14.34.1 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR)*.

USA tower crane and mobile crane operators as certified by NCCCO or OECF respectively will be eligible to apply for a BC Crane Operator Card by virtue of their original USA certification. They will need to meet all the posted requirements and either maintain their original certification or meet the requirements for renewal of the BC Crane Operator Card in BC.

2.3 Model for an ongoing accreditation framework

Sustainability of the process for mutually recognizing credentials along with the appropriate protocols is an important element for a successful long term outcome.

An annual comparison and discussion will occur between BCACS and NCCCO, OECP, and SOLAS respectively, regarding any substantial changes to the certification schemes, be that regulatory, accreditation, renewal, or assessment. A determination will be made annually to scope and enact any changes to the mutual recognition process, if and as needed.

The overall objective of building a model for mutual recognition of credentials of skilled workers was met. The work, as carried out by CHRSC nationally and regionally by BCACS, has led to the mutual recognition of mobile crane and tower crane operator credentials and will both facilitate the integration of skilled foreign trained crane operators into the Canadian workforce and also facilitate the movement of Canadian crane operators internationally in support of Canadian industry.

2.4 Multi-jurisdictional viewer

The Viewer is available at www.bcacs.ca, www.chrsc.ca, and www.natoc.ca. It includes all 13 Canadian jurisdictions, Ireland and the USA. The Viewer has the built-in capacity and structure to handle any occupation or trade.

The objective in building the Viewer for the crane trade was to provide industry, regulators, and apprenticeship bodies with a clear picture of the crane credential matrix in Canada in a visual format online. The Viewer makes it easy to determine where a person could work based on the credential they hold from their home jurisdiction. In addition, the user is provided with the necessary links to information for any supplemental steps that may be involved in order to be in compliance in the host jurisdiction.

2.5 Additional project outcomes

There was a wide range of very positive outcomes, outside the scope of the project, that were noted and tracked on a quarterly basis. More information is available by contacting info@natoc.ca.

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