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## **NCCCO Urges OSHA to Solve Crane Operator Certification Issue Quickly**



OSHA's announced proposal to extend the compliance date for the crane operator certification requirement has drawn mixed reactions from the industry.

During the meeting of the Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health (ACCSH) on May 23 and 24, Graham Brent, executive director of the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO), asked why testing by capacity is needed.

"Although it is regrettable that it has taken OSHA so long to recognize that the industry has serious problems with the agency's stance on issues such as certifying by capacity and the meaning of certification, it is a vindication of the efforts of concerned industry stakeholders over the past 18 months to raise awareness on these matters that OSHA has, finally, taken notice," Brent said. "We strongly urge OSHA to pursue the second phase of this initiative—the development of proposed rulemaking—with all haste."

"An extension of the deadline, already unpopular with many sectors of industry—is worthless without immediate and substantive action to solicit industry comments that will result in a resolution accurately reflecting the intent of the industry group—C-DAC—that OSHA itself assembled to develop this rule," Brent continued.

Members of the original committee established by OSHA (the Cranes and Derricks Advisory Committee or C-DAC committee) have repeatedly said it was not their intent to require operators to be certified by capacity in the way OSHA has since viewed it, according to Brent. Testimony from industry representatives at OSHA's Stakeholder Meetings in April overwhelmingly confirmed the lack of support for OSHA's position on this issue, he continued.

"NCCCO has stayed faithful to the wishes of industry and preserved its certification programs in the format that, over the last 17 years, has been proven to save lives and reduce accidents," Brent said. He noted that CCO certification was "fully compliant" with the C-DAC committee's intent to provide an effective means of ensuring crane operators are certified.

"All CCO certifications comply with the current OSHA federal law," Brent said, "which, following OSHA's announcement, will remain in place for at least the next four years. NCCCO stands, now as always, behind the 130,000 certifications it has issued since 1996," he added. "CCO-certified operators can rest assured that their certifications are, and will remain, valid."



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Since then, the NCCCO has issued a 'Top Ten' list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and answers on the certification by capacity subject, now available at <http://www.nccco.org/RuleReopeningFAQ.html>.

This includes information on what employers and operators need to consider in the meantime, including recertification and state licensing.

Meanwhile, Debbie Dickinson, executive director of Crane Institute Certification (CIC), said: "The proposed extension to 2017 is likely to pass and OSHA is expected to take the regulation back to negotiated rulemaking. During this time, OSHA will address questions raised regarding certification/qualification and add more language on employer responsibilities. The public can expect separate rulemaking as a result."

"Certification by different capacity levels, as CIC's tests are structured, is a good indication of an individual's skill and knowledge and distinguishes his or her abilities to employers," she continued. "Our mission is saving lives. Certification by different levels of type and capacity gives operators a meaningful credential and gives employers worthwhile information about an operator's knowledge, skill and abilities."