



BC Association for
CRANE SAFETY

Crane Operator Qualification

INDUSTRY WORKSHOP REPORT

TOWER CRANE TASK GROUP MEETING #4

WorkSafeBC, Richmond, BC

February 13th, 2006

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In Attendance:	Russ Dowdeswell	Log Home Builder's Association
	Ron Karras	Micron
	Greg Starchuk	Eagle West
	Kerry Hawley	Mega Cranes
	Larry Becker	PCL Constructors
	Gord Sheehan	Graham Group
	Joe Bishop	IUEO 115 Tower Crane Operator
	Val Coupal	Coupal Climbing Cranes Ltd.
	Fraser Cocks	BCACS (Executive Director)
	Kathy Sheppard	WorkSafeBC (Task Group Coordinator)
	Lee Middleton	Fulford Harbour Consulting (Facilitator)

Background

This workshop was the fourth in a series of task group workshops for tower crane industry stakeholders. These stakeholders are working toward a competency based, licensing and certification framework for tower crane operators in BC. The BC Association for Crane Safety is facilitating this process and providing the administrative support needed for industry to lead this change. The competency based certification framework will be used by WorkSafeBC as the foundation for a crane safety regulation to be enacted in January or July of 2007.

The first two workshops focused on defining the skills standards for tower crane operators. Attention was paid to skills standards first because having these agreed to by industry is important for these reasons:

1. Skills standards define the assessment of a competent operator.
2. Skills standards show what different levels of operator require to do their job.
3. Skills standards lay out a training and career pathway for operators.

Together with the industry supported operator licensing structure, which was the focus of the third workshop, the skills standard outlines the framework for a competency based operator standard as well as the training required to get new operators to the required competency standard. The framework also shows what training and experience existing operators need to be able to move to higher certifications or to move within the industry.

The fourth workshop builds on this work and describes an approach to the 'business model' that could be used to coordinate the development, implementation and ongoing development of an operator certification scheme in the Province.

Workshop Goals

The tower crane and self-erect operator occupation spans a number of industries and a variety of equipment types including tower cranes, city crane (self-erect) and self erect cranes with a wide range of lifting capacities, and built in safety limiting devices. In developing a certification structure it is important to strike a balance between certification requirements that ensure a safe and competent level of operation and one that does not impose an inappropriate number and/or level of competencies for the different levels of required work. The task group was quite clear that they wanted the certification structure to mirror the natural progression of how a tower crane operator is trained in the industry, and of how self-erect crane owners train the client's designated operator.

Refined certification structure

In the third workshop we refined the certification structure to strike the right balance between licensing complication and the operational realities of the industry. In this, the fourth workshop, we review the certification structure and re-validate it as being appropriate for industry use.

Business models

Describe preferences for a business model to implement and coordinate all necessary crane certification assessment and documentation. The business model as outlined previously has two sub-components that will guide the discussion.

Funding options

Map out funding options that might be available to support this model from existing government industry training funds.

Tracking and documentation

Explore ways crane operator's licenses and record of certification can be stored, documented and validated by employers.

Certification Structure

During the workshop the certification structure developed at the last workshop was validated and no changes were made.

One additional item of discussion was the establishment of an expanded rigger foundational program which could be used not only as an entry into the trade, but also as a course to teach specialized rigging skills in industries, such as the ICI

sector that require these. The foundational rigging course would bridge into the crane foundation course.

Business models

The groups divided the business model needed to run start and run the competency certification framework for crane operation into three phases:

- *Development* – design and development of assessment tools and competency certification scheme.
- *Start up* – assessment and certification of incumbent operators and promotion of the scheme to stakeholders as well as management of stakeholder interests.
- *Sustaining* – ongoing operation of the certification scheme, assessment of new trainees and updating competency requirements.

In the workshop the task group focused on the first and second phases. After discussion of the roles and responsibilities of each industry and government partner supporting development of the crane certification scheme in the Province the Task Group came up with the following main points to guide the development of a crane certification business model:

Business Model main points

- 1 **Use Industry Training Authority support to issue and develop credentials:** Program standards funding supports development of the competency and assessment standards for operators.
- 2 **BC Association for Crane Safety tracks operators:** The safety record of individual operators is important to the industry and the stakeholders felt that for the certification structure to be most useful industry, through its third party agent, should play a key role in tracking the ongoing safety record and certification status of operators.
- 3 **BC Association arbitrates improper operation cases:** Where an operator disputes a charge of improper operation, outside the normal mandate of WorkSafeBC enforcement, the Association will arbitrate between employer and operator and suggest training / improvement plans for operator skill development. Where appropriate, the Association would become involved as the industry advisory development in WorkSafeBC investigations or hearings.

- 4 **Logbook tracks experience and skills:** In order for the certification structure to be of best value a Logbook will be developed by the Association to track operator competence and experience. The Logbook will be used to re-certify operators after a time frame of 3 - 5 years. Those operators who are able to demonstrate ongoing evidence of competence through their Logbook will simply be re-issued a license.

Funding

The task group stakeholders formally endorsed applying to the Industry Training Authority for funds to develop the program standards on a competency basis for tower crane operators.

Application deadline for this cycle of funding in March 15th 2006 and will require, as described in the meeting notes from the last task group meeting (#3) broad evidence of industry support, both through letters of support and evidence of stakeholder engagement in the process. Attending the task group meetings is a significant commitment and powerfully demonstrates industry support in development of the certification scheme.

Tracking and documentation

This section summarises what task group members have agreed to in past meetings on the subject of tracking and documenting operator competence. Points of support were:

- 1 **Have the system third party verified:** In short what the employers wanted was a place to go and verify the accuracy of the licensing information an operator presents.
- 2 **Link licensing to a Logbook:** If an operator wishes to move through the certification levels having a way to document with some detail their experience against the skill requirements of the next licensing level is important. Additionally re-certification options would depend very much on being able to track an operators working history, the idea being active operators would have less frequent and less onerous recertification requirements.
- 3 **Track the safety record of each operator:** Stakeholders felt a third party association should have responsibility for tracking the safety record of each operator by logging accidents. This is similar to the driving licensing scheme in use in the Province.
- 4 **Link with company's existing record keeping:** Some companies are already tracking the competency of their operators and

stakeholders felt that for the assessment and licensing system to work most effectively in the Province, these existing structures should be used to support licensing where they exist.

Business model

The table below summarises the business model proposed by the task group to develop and run the crane certification scheme. It proposes a strong coordinating role by industry through the BC Association for Crane Safety.

Central independent coordination

	WorkSafeBC	BC Safety Authority	Industry Training Authority	Association for Crane Safety (Industry)
<i>Function</i>				
Set operator competency standards			Fund development of these.	Yes
Certify training			Yes – certify training programs, including foundation training programs	Advise on training approval
Develop assessment tools			Fund development of tools	Yes – in close consultation with SMEs
Conduct Assessments			Results sent to ITA	Yes
Record assessment results and issue qualifications			Yes	Recommend award on basis of standards met
Issue certificates of competence (licenses)				Yes
Track Safety violations	Provide infraction information to the Association			Maintain database of safety violations
Update Provincial Operator database				Maintain database or contract third party to do so
Enforce Safety infractions	Yes			
Arbitrate Safety infractions				Yes
Promote and facilitate training opportunities				Yes

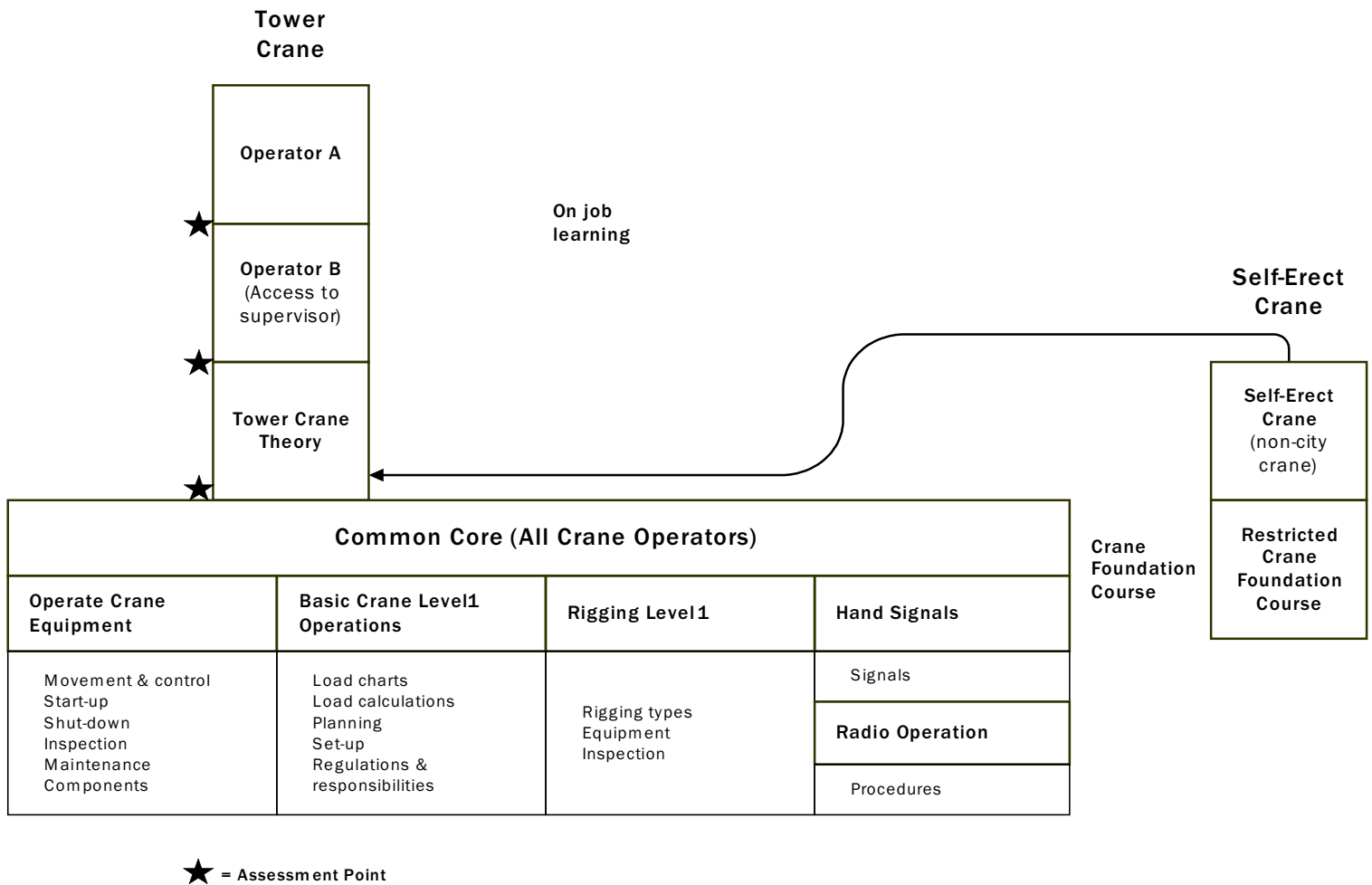
Next steps

The next task group meeting is scheduled for March 15th or 16th. At that meeting we will review the application for program development (standards) funding from to the ITA prior to submission to the ITA's Board Committee, which reviews these applications. In doing so, we will define more precisely the role of the assessor and the nature of the assessments.

With the work of all three of the task groups, we will then be in a position to draft the crane safety certification framework for presentation to stakeholders around the Province prior to the May WorkSafeBC public hearing.

Appendix A Draft Certification Structure

Tower Crane / Self-Erect Crane Operator: February 20/06 Model



BC Crane Certification Framework

