News You Can Use: OSHA Crane Operator Qualification

On November 9, 2018 OSHA published a Final Rule amending the requirements for crane and derrick operator training, certification, and employer evaluation (29 CFR 1926 Subpart CC).

The final rule required:

1. Employers to:

a. train operators as needed to perform assigned crane activities; and

b. evaluate operators and document successful completion of the evaluations.

2. Crane operators to:

a. be certified or licensed; and

b. receive ongoing training as needed to operate new equipment.

The deadline for training was December 9, 2018. If you already evaluated your operators prior to Dec. 9, 2018, you do not have to conduct those evaluations again, but you will need to document when the evaluations were completed.

The evaluation and documentation requirements become effective on ***February 7, 2019***.

Training

Under the new Final Rule, operator certification can be based on crane "type" ***or*** "crane type and capacity." This is a change from the 2010 rule – which required certification based on "crane type ***and*** capacity. "

Operators who are not yet certified are classified as "operators-in-training." Employers must provide them with sufficient formal and practical instruction to ensure they have the skills, knowledge, and ability to recognize and avert risk needed to operate their cranes safely.

Operators-in-training can operate cranes without being certified (subject to certain restrictions), and they must be continuously monitored. The employer is also responsible for retraining as necessary.

Evaluation

Under the Final Rule employers are required to evaluate operators to ensure they:

1. Possess the skills and knowledge necessary to operate the crane(s) they are assigned (taking into account the cranes' size and configuration), as well as the hoisting activities required.
2. Demonstrate they have the ability to "recognize and avert" risk.

The Final Rule also clarifies what is required for post-certification training:

1. Determine level of practical and formal training needed by an operator to possess the skills, knowledge, and ability to recognize risk and operate equipment safely.
2. Re-train as necessary.
3. Training methods chosen by the employer must be effective and responsive to each operator's training needs.

Documentation

The evaluations must be documented. The evaluation document, which must be available at the worksite, must include at least the following:

- Names of the operator and the evaluator (who also must sign it).
- Date the evaluation was conducted.
- Make, model, and configuration of the crane.

Helpful links:

- Subpart CC – Cranes and Derricks in Construction
- NCCCO OSHA Crane Rule Resource Center
- Crane Safety – Safety Talk

