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COCA Publishes Column in JOC

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**Column**

**Mandatory crane certification deadline looms in  
British Columbia**

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The deadline for the mandatory certification of crane operators in British Columbia is fast approaching. As of March 1, 2011, all crane operators in the province will be required by WorkSafeBC to have achieved certification from the B.C. Association for Crane Safety (BCACS).

Also at the beginning of March, WorkSafeBC safety officers will be inspecting workplaces and writing orders on companies with crane operators, who are not certified.

These orders can lead to costly fines, which can total in the thousands of dollars.

The companies that need to certify their operators can also save money by acting sooner rather than later.

About 15,000 people are engaged or registered in the process to date.

It is not known how many operators still have to certify.

The certification process requires that a crane operator successfully complete a practical assessment on a crane.

This is, of course, to check that the operator knows how to operate the crane to an acceptable standard.

For the past two years, the cost for this assessment has been set at \$500. However, it will increase to \$750 as of March 1, 2011.

There are still spaces available before the deadline of February 28, 2011.

But, after that time, the higher fee will apply.

The fee increases because the expected lower volume of assessments means that there must be a higher unit cost to meet the expenses of conducting the assessment. The requirement is the result of a change to WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (OHSR) and was announced more than two years ago.

Numerous media and information campaigns have advised the construction industry of the need to certify crane operators.

The mandatory certification was initiated with the co-operation of the construction industry and WorkSafeBC because of a concern about the lack of standardized tests for competency in the operation of construction cranes.

The B.C. Association for Crane Safety was created to meet this need.

The BCACS is managed by a board of directors drawn from the users of cranes in the construction industry.

The executive director of the association is Fraser Cocks, who is a former industry standards, assessment and training developer.

To register for crane operator certification or to enquire about the process, contact Fraser Cocks at 604-525-1227 or by email at [info@bcacs.ca](mailto:info@bcacs.ca).

*Grant McMillan is the president of the Council of Construction Associations (COCA), which represents 16 construction associations and acts on behalf of the construction industry in WorkSafeBC matters. Grant is also a member of the Journal of Commerce Editorial Advisory Board.*

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